RETURN TO GLATTON

2010

Peterborough, England
May 29 – Registration
June 1 – Closing Banquet
Flumancl@aol.com--(717)-432-1067
By all accounts, the Colorado Springs Reunion was a big success in spite of the typical Colorado weather. Of course, the week after the reunion we had our usual September 70 degree temperatures again. Nancy and I would like to thank everyone who helped make Colorado Springs so successful. Debs Carter was wonderful in the PX along with Jane Pogue, Trisha Mach, Lori Barnett, Erin Pogue, and others; Chris and Carl Sechrist once again provided us with a whole room full of displays and designed the program for the banquet; Melinda and Cindy McCurry and their brother Eric and wife Joanna helped in so many different ways, most notably helping George Grau when he became sick enough to have to go to the hospital. Justine Sechrist sang a spine-tingling “America the Beautiful” a capella, and brother Cameron proudly presented the American flag with Chris Cronin carrying the British flag at the Banquet. Speaking of Chris Cronin, he accepted an invitation to be the newest British Historian. Bob Day’s granddaughters were in charge of a very enjoyable lunch in Cripple Creek. I know we are forgetting to mention others who helped, but we appreciate all the help we had and couldn’t have done it without you. THANK YOU ONE AND ALL!

We also very much thank our British friends who made the trip over the ‘pond’ to celebrate another reunion with us: George and Jane Pogue, Richard and Erin Pogue, Tim and Angie Newell, and Chris Cronin. We will have reunion pictures provided by Michelle Hanley in the next newsletter. Perhaps the highlight of the reunion would be the marriage proposal from John Parker to Nancy because “she doesn’t have a husband and needs help”. (She said no!) (We didn’t ask what kind of help she needs.)

The next stateside reunion was very enthusiastically approved by the members in attendance and the Board of Directors to take place in Savannah in 2011. Lori Barnett, who hosted the last Savannah reunion, will once again take charge. Will Fluman Jr. told us about a B-17 donated to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. It is being fully restored and will be on static display.

The new website is well under way with hours of time put in by the Fluman family, and Carl and Chris Sechrist. We all owe them a great deal for tackling the problems of the old website and seeing that we get up and running again with a new and improved website.

My project during my term as Association President is to update the Memorabilia collection. Much of our Memorabilia is in a disorganized mess. I will be working these next two years to update, organize and improve the appearance of our Memorabilia. If you have pictures you would like included in our books, please send a copy to me. It is helpful if you can attach names to faces.

It is a pleasure to be able serve the membership of the 457th Bomb Group Association as President for these next two years. — Joe Toth
ANNOUNCING

THE NEW WEBSITE

OF THE

457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION.

This site is dedicated to the brave men of the 457th and their families for their service and eternal sacrifices made to our country and all humanity during World War II.

Please note that not all links on the site are up and running. It takes blood, sweat, tears and time to complete a project such as this one. Once done, however, this will be the premier site of any bomb group out there.
Dear Members of the 457th Bomb Group Association,

I'm sure everyone has noticed that newsletters are not being published on a regular basis as they once were.

I have to be perfectly honest and upfront with you. I have been doing the newsletters since 1999 and was helping Mickey Briggs with them before that. Quite frankly, I'm a bit burned out.

With the job I have now, I am not usually home until after 6:30 in the evening. That is a long day for me and doesn't leave much time for anything else.

I know that the newsletter is a very important part of our Association and without it, communication stops. Other Associations have folded without a newsletter to keep it all together.

That being said, I need help. I would ideally like for someone else to step up and take over. Maybe it's time for a new format anyway. I could continue to help but need someone else to be in charge.

So, how about it...anyone willing to take over the Newsletter Editor's job? In a perfect world, we should have 4 newsletters a year. Cindy and Melinda McCurry are going to be doing the mailing of the newsletter, but I need someone to take over my part as Editor.

Please let me know if you are willing and able.
March 2010

WHO: All members of the Association

WHAT: Address update required

WHEN: NOW

WHERE: Nancy Toth
       453 Sunset Lane
       Pueblo, CO 81005

WHY: Effective May 1, 2009, the U.S. Postal Service tightened up their regulations for bulk mailing. If we continue to mail newsletters to incorrect addresses, we can be fined and/or have our mail permit withdrawn.

In an effort to keep that from happening, we are requiring that the attached page be completed and mailed back to Nancy by May 1, 2010. If we do not receive the information from you, your name will be dropped from the mailing list.

We do NOT want to drop anyone from the mailing list who wants to continue receiving the newsletter, but saving printing costs and mailing costs has become a priority for the Association.

HOW: Complete the back of this page and mail it by the deadline.

IF, AT A FUTURE DATE, YOUR INFORMATION CHANGES, PLEASE NOTIFY NANCY RIGHT AWAY TO AVOID BEING DROPPED FROM THE MAILING LIST.

Sincerely,

Your 457th Bomb Group Association Board of Directors
NAME ________________________________

ADDRESS ________________________________

CITY __________________ STATE ______ ZIP ______

TELEPHONE ______-____-______

EMAIL ________________________________

*******************************************************************************

Mark which of the following applies to you:

____ I am a Fireballer in _______ Squadron (748th, 749th, 750th, or 751st)

Job during WWII service: ________________________________________________

____ I am Related to a Fireballer: Name ________________________________

Deceased _______ or Living ______

Relationship ________________________________

Squadron ________________________________

____ I am interested in Aviation History

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL? YES NO

If YES, make sure we have a correct email address for you. If you change your email,
be sure to notify Nancy at: nancytoth@comcast.net

If you are a widow of a 457th man, you are entitled to continue receiving the newsletter.
Please let me know if you no longer want to receive the newsletter.

MAIL COMPLETED FORM TO: Nancy Toth
453 Sunset Lane
Pueblo, CO 81005
MEMORIAL SERVICE – COLORADO SPRINGS 2009

The following 457th members have passed away since the 2007 Reunion and were honored at the Memorial Service at the 2009 Reunion

KENNETH L. ANDERSON
SIDNEY A. BACON
DONALD D. BECK
JOHN BOUZOUDES
ANDREW BROWN, JR.
OLIVER G. BURGESS, JR
LLOYD R. BURKE
ANTHONY H. COLIN
MICHAEL J. DENITTI
SAMUEL E. DIKE
CHAMPE DOBLER
JACK GASSMAN
JOSEPH W. “JIGGS” HAMILTON
BENNIE W. JOHNSON
MELVIN J. KEIFFER

DONALD R. LALLKY
WILLIAM “BILL” MACH
PERCY MACK
LARRY MCDONNELL
HERB PARIS
BRYAN “PETE” PETERSON
WILLARD “HAP” REESE
DANIEL D. RICE
RUSSELL SELWYN
JERRY SILVERMAN
HARMON A. SMITH
HARLAN J. VAN DIELEN
CLINTON E. WELLS
R. C. ZEGLER

Death is not a period, but a comma in the story of life.
**Flak Fills the Sky**

German antiaircraft guns dealt a blow to Allied planes, men, and morale

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**German air defense**

After World War I Germany built up its air defenses, creating a network of artillery, radar, smoke machines, and fighter bases. The main offensive weapon of German ground-based air defense was the 88, a powerful medium-caliber gun. The first 88s could shoot a 21-pound high-explosive antiaircraft shell at a muzzle velocity of 2,630 feet per second—at a daunting range of 25,000 feet. It quickly developed a reputation as a formidable opponent of Allied aircraft.

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**The 88mm Flak 37 Crew**

Crews in defensive positions were organized into batteries, and received height and direction data from central fire directors.

- **Fuse setter, round handler**: Dipped the ends of the rounds into the fuse setter, which primed them to explode at the set height.
- **Fuse setter, operator**: Changed inputs to match data on the heights of enemy planes.
- **Gun layers**: Manually matched the settings on the elevation and traversing dials according to data from the radar command post.

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**Versatility**

The 88mm gun was also a lethal antitank weapon. Rommel’s troops used it in North Africa and Normandy.

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**German high-explosive antiaircraft shell**

- **Fuse**
- **Casing** (9/16 of an inch thick)
- **Explosive**
- **Driving bands** (stabilized the shell)

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**Ammunition handlers**

Could load 15 rounds per minute in theory, but that seldom occurred, due to supply shortages.

**Gun commander**

Organized replacement positions in case of injury—which happened often, when worn barrels exploded.
The effects of flak

Shrapnel
In 1944, U.S. Army scientists blew up a standard German antiaircraft round in a specially constructed wooden room. They picked the pieces out of the wood to determine how much shrapnel was in each shell (approximated above).

Positions hit by flak
Out of 963 total flak casualties of the U.S. Eighth Air Force from June to August 1944:

1. Pilot 7.7%
2. Copilot 6.6%
3. Navigator 13.2%
4. Bombardier 15.8%
5. Radio operator 8.7%
6. Waist gunner 21.6%
7. Tail turret gunner 5.5%
8. Top turret gunner 8.3%
9. Rear turret gunner 12.6%

The bombardier, at the front of the plane, was an easy target, while waist gunners exposed much of their bodies to flak.

Percentage of lethal flak hits
Half of the Eighth Air Force's casualties from June to August 1944 were due to flak strikes. The other casualties fell to fighter guns and cannon fire. U.S. Army doctors analyzed where air crews were most vulnerable.

New equipment
Helmets were adapted from the standard M1 helmet. Vests and aprons were made from plates of manganese steel, a material that wouldn't shatter on impact. This body armor reduced casualties by 88 percent from 1943 to 1944.

The cost of flak
The U.S. Army Air Forces lost 18,418 aircraft in combat over Europe—7,821 of them to flak. This table shows Eighth Air Force casualties from April to July 1944—at a point when the 88 was the primary means of German air defense.
Continuation of an article taken from a booklet entitled AIRFIELD FOCUS
Glatton/Conington by John N. Smith. This is a condensed history of Glatton Airfield
and the 457th Bomb Group Association. The first 4 installments were in 3 previous
newsletters.

Please note that the article appears below exactly as it appeared in the booklet.

Three days later, on the 27th (May) the 457th led the 8th to Ludwigshaven in Germany to
attack the marshalling yards. 36 aircraft took off from Glatton, led by Lt. Col. Luper
in the lead PFF B-17 with a total of 344 1st Bomb Division aircraft behind. All 36 457th
BG machines bombed the primary target with fair results despite encountering
accurate flak, 19 of the Group's B-17s receiving battle-damage. The formation was
also attacked by considerable waves of fighters, mainly 109s. The Group lost three
aircraft: 42-38055 flown by Lt. Roger W. Dinkman fell foul of a fighter, crashing in the
Netherlands. Five of the crew evaded capture, the other five becoming POWs. 42-
97460, De Layed Lady, piloted by 2Lt. William E. Dee, crashed at Saarlanden,
Germany with 1 KIA and 9 POW. 42-31594 Sweat'er Out, piloted by 2Lt. Artie J.
Whitlow, crashed with 2 evading capture, 2 KIA and 6 POW.

Col. Luper's own B-17, Rene III, landed on
one wheel due to flak damage, the crew
walking away uninjured and the aircraft was
repaired to fly again.

On the Group's 53rd mission on 28 May, led
by Maj. Hozier, the 457th took off at 1030 hrs
heading for German synthetic oil targets
again. The 8th Air Force put up 1,341
aircraft that day, the Group going to Dessau
and the Junkers aero engine and aircraft
factories. They were heavily attacked by
fighters and suffered losses. The Group
made two runs over the target, but thick haze
and smoke obscured it, so Major Hozier
decided to attack the secondary, an aircraft
factory at Leipzig. Three aircraft were lost:
42-97067 Black Puff Polly flown by Lt.
Rudolph L. Stohl (1 KIA, 9 POW), 42-97452
flown by Lt. Emanuel Haufl (9 KIA) and 42-
31520 piloted by Lt. Clyde B Knipfer (all
POW). The Group arrived back overhead
Glatton at 1750 hrs.

Group Record: Two hours later Lt. Connors,
who had been given up as lost came limping in
with only one engine functioning properly, two
burnt out in the target area and three cylinders
on a third punctured by enemy fire. He had
dropped out of formation, thrown everything
movable out of his plane on German towns
below and flew all the way alone at 12,000 ft
with an airspeed between 115 and 135 mph.

Col. Luper in combat gear and the results of
the one-wheel-down landing on 24 May 1944.
Since becoming operational in the UK, the 457th had completed over 50 missions in a little over three months, with some combat crews completing their tour and returning to the USA in record time, and the pace was hotting up.

2 June, Mission 57 as part of the build-up to D-Day to attack gun control positions in Northern France. 18 aircraft took off to hit 155mm field guns at Hardelot, on the coast between Boulogne and Le Tourquet. It had been a short mission; take-off started at 1015 hrs and the Group returned overhead at 1420 – there were no losses. On return, two B-17s buzzed the field, both crews celebrating 25 missions. For the first time all crews were debriefed at their parking areas.

Mission 59, two days later; target rail communications 8 miles south of Paris. 36 aircraft departed from Glatton at 1950 hrs. The results were good, but due to heavy cloud the formation was forced to return to base at low level.

Official Record: ‘...the Thames Estuary was crossed under very poor visibility conditions and hundreds of invasion craft were observed.’

Glatton was socked in with bad weather, so the Group landed away, returning next morning.

Invasion Day - 6 June 1944, the 457th was targeting coastal defensive positions on the Cherburg peninsula, but with unknown results for cloud obscured the targets. Official records say ‘...this was the 69th Mission for our Group. The feeling of all personnel is impossible to record.’

Life at Glatton Camp was improved when on 11 June bus transportation was laid on to provide nightly trips into Peterborough for all personnel on the base. Two civilian 50-seat buses returned back to the Camp at 2230 hrs from the Bishops Road Bus Station.

The next day saw more reasons to celebrate for Jim Luper was promoted to full Colonel and quite a celebration was in order at the Aero Club.

14 June – Maximum Effort. The Group put up 60 aircraft to attack the airfields at Le Bourget and Melum. There were no enemy fighters and flak was regarded as only ‘...light to moderate’ but it was very accurate and the Group lost six aircraft: 42-102464 flown by 2Lt Scharles L. Blackwell with four evading capture and five POW; 42-31568, pilot 2Lt William F. Rogers with seven evading capture and two POW; 42-97062, pilot 2Lt Malcolm E. Johnson with six KIA and four POW; 42-97579 Local Mission, flown by 2Lt Roy W. Allen with nine evading capture and one KIA; 42-31618, pilot 2Lt James Lapaz with five KIA and four rescued after coming down in the English Channel.

A further B-17 (identity unknown) caught fire and with the cockpit filling with smoke the pilot gave the order to bail out. Thinking that the rest of the crew had departed safely, he proceeded to bail out himself. However, the other crew members managed to control the fire and Capt. Syptak brought the aircraft back to base with no further ‘loss’ of personnel.

20 June and the 71st mission was an early departure (0446 hrs) to bomb Hamburg.
The Group flew as far north as Louth in Lincolnshire to assemble before setting off across the North Sea. Results of bombing the oil refineries was regarded as 'good', with one aircraft 42-31615 Suafusk Shamrock flown by Lt. William F Bomer lost with three KIA, seven POW. 18 aircraft were to suffer battle-damage due to flak and Fw 190 attacks.

The same day the Group sent 12 aircraft to attack Watten but due to 10/10th cloud over the target Poplingle airfield was hit instead.

42-31615 Suafusk Shamrock lost on Mission 71.

Glatton at 1345 hrs with 15 B-17s flak damaged.

41-2578, a B-17E universally known as the 'Grand Old Lady of the 8th' for she had been around since the 8th Air Force was formed, serving with numerous units, arriving in the UK at Polebrooke in June 1942, taking part in the very first 8th Air Force raid. Eventually she was declared 'war weary' and assigned as a 'hack' with the 482nd BG at Alconbury.

578 arrived at Glatton for use as a target tower and by late 1944 was painted up in red, white and blue stripes for better identification. By 1945 the aircraft moved again, this time to the 20th Fighter Group at nearby Kings Cliffe where it was renamed Big Tin Bird. It eventually finished up on the Burtonwood scrapheap.

41-2578 Big Tin Bird, one of only two B-17E's Flown by the 457th Bomb Group.

Mission 73 to Berlin the next day saw 42-107015 was badly damaged and landed in Sweden where the crew of nine were interned. 42-36156 crashed in Germany with five KIA, four POW.

Squadron, Group and Wing assemblies had always been a problem due to poor weather. A typical example was mission 79, the raid on Leipzig on 29 June. Take-off commenced at 0455, with 7/10th cloud at various levels and dense contrails caused five other Wings to abandon the mission. The 457th had considerable trouble in assembling their own formation so the squadrons of the Group became split up on their way to the target. Of the 21 aircraft Lt. Albert Gumuliauskas' 43-37562 was hit by flak and crashed, the crew becoming POWs. The Group landed at

For the first three days of July the Group was on stand-down due to bad weather. The time was not wasted however, for on 1 July the Red Cross organised a Garden Fete at nearby Conington Castle. The event was opened by Col. Luber. On 3 July the Stations 'Fireballs' dance band, under the direction of Sgt. Phil Falappino, performed away from the base; so popular were they, they had been asked to perform an evening engagement at St. Ives. Next day it was announced that all 457th personnel were now entitled to wear the Bronze Star on the ETO ribbon.

To be continued next issue.
Due to increasing attacks on London and the Home Counties by V-1 Flying-bombs, between June 29 and July 5, the 81st mission saw the 457th making attacks on the French mainland, bombing both the launch and supply sites. Take-off was at 0636 hrs and the last aircraft had returned to base by 11.20 hrs. Then it was reloaded and re-armed before the second mission of the day. Take-off was at 1700 hrs again to the V-1 sites, this time five miles east of St. Omer. All were back at base by 2126 hrs.

Mission 83 was back to the Leipzig-Taucha aero-engine factory in an attempt to complete what was started on 29 June. The Group was still using one B-17G model in combat, but this day 42-30731 being flown by Lt. Jack B. Owen suffered fuel transfer problems from its Tokyo tanks, and despite jettisoning the bomb load, it was forced to ditch in the Channel with the loss of four crew. This time the raid was declared successful.

Disaster struck on 11 July during assembly on mission 86, target Munich. En-route to Felixstowe, a 748 BS B-17 flown by Lt. Gazzele had its left wing tip catch fire and blow off. Soon the rest of the wing was ablaze. The aircraft did a loop, then quickly lost height, disappearing into the clouds. As the crew were bailing out, the aircraft exploded, blowing the pilot clean out of his aircraft. The wreckage crashed near Watton. Sadly, three crew were killed. Results of the raid were 'good' with no further losses occurring to the group.

Mission 87 was back to Munich again and, as the weather was poor, this was to be a PFF attack with 36 aircraft departing into solid overcast. Formation join-up was not achieved until Felixstowe. Approaching the target 42-35122 My Buddy of the 748th BS, being flown by Lt. Gerald L. Kerr, was seen to be falling out of the formation with one engine smoking, presumably hit by flak. It was not seen again, but later was confirmed to have flown into a mountainside in Switzerland. Also heading for Switzerland, but with a happier outcome, was 44-6111 Hell's Belle being flown by Lt. Ed Kozel. The aircraft had been hit during the bomb run and lost a propeller. All the crew were interned.

Following intelligence reports that the Me 163 rocket fighter had become operational, the 457th headed for Peenemunde for mission 90 during the early hours 18 July, for this experimental station was thought to be a centre of production for hydrogen peroxide, this tiny fighter's fuel. Bombing was rather widespread despite light flak. The return journey was over the Fw 190 plant at Anklam, so the opportunity to take photographs for future missions was taken!

Crew briefing. The board behind shows the 751st BS radio call signs.

Picture at left:
Inside the windowless Operations building, showing the 457th Lead Team Status board. This building still exists to this day; albeit as a pile of re-enforced steel enmeshed pile of concrete rubble.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE.
457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

New [] Renewal [] Address Change []

Fireballer? [] -or- Relative of a Fireballer? [] Other? [] ___________

If a relative, name and relationship of the Veteran to you __________________________

____________________________

Name_________________________ Nickname________________ Spouse_________________

Address________________________

City_________________ State_________ Zip + 4 _______+______ *

* (Must have the zip +4)

Phone________________________ Email_________________

Birthday____________________ Squadron #_________ Rank___________

Dates Assigned_________________ Duties_________________

Plane Name and #_____________ Pilot's Name_________________

POW?/Evadee? ______ Date of capture/escape/release: _______________________

Retired Military? ______ Rank______ Comments: _____________________________

NOTE CHANGE IN TREASURER BELOW. DO NOT MAIL TO JOHN PEARSON.

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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 Assoc.

Mail this form and check to: Lori Barnett, Treasurer
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PAST PRESIDENTS

1973-75 – William Wilborn
1976 – Howard Larsen (dec)
1977-79 – Bill Silker
1980-81 – Edward Repp (dec)
1982-83 – Daniel Graham (dec)
1984 – William Good (dec)
1985 – Dave Summerville (dec)
1986-87 – Clayton Bejet
1988-89 – Donald Sellon
1990-91 – John Welch
1992-93 – Roland Byers (dec)
1993-97 – Billy Hightower (dec)
1997-99 – Lee Zimmerman
1999-01 – Craig Harris (dec)
2001-03 – Will Fluman
2003-05 – Don Nielsen
2005-07 – James Bass
2007-09 – George Grau
WINSTON CHURCHILL (1874-1965)
British Prime Minister. He began his career as a correspondent in the Boer War, where he was captured by Louis Botha, who later became the prime minister of the Union of South Africa. He held nearly every post in the British government at one time or another. He was:

- Undersecretary to the Colonies: 1906
- Privy Councillor: 1907
- President of the Board of Trade: 1908-10
- Home Secretary: 1910-1911
- First Lord of the Admiralty: 1911
- Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster: 1915
- Minister of Munitions: 1917
- Secretary of State for War and Air: 1919
- Undersecretary of the Colonies: 1921
- Chancellor of the Exchequer: 1924-29
- First Lord of the Admiralty: 1939
- Chairman of Armed Services Cmtee.: 1940
- Prime Minister: 1940-45
- Minister of Defense: 1940
- First Lord of the Treasury: 1940
- Prime Minister: 1951-55