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483RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION

(1943) Ephrata, WA – MacDill Field, Tampa, FL – Sterparone, San Severo-Pisa, Italy (1945)

VOLUME 42

March 2019

NUMBER 1

President's Message

Dear 483rd Members,

It has been a cold, cold winter this year in Denver, where I live. Causing me to think about the hardships and struggles of our husbands, fathers, family members, and friends from the 483rd had to endure in Italy. The basic things, so often taken for granted. For example, such as staying in a warm and dry home, a place of our own to sleep, family with us, meals we are able to make for ourselves when and what we want, and so much more. I can easily forget the struggles our veterans, service men and women went through to protect all of us. To help give us the freedoms we now enjoy.

I am glad to be part of the 483rd, to provide an opportunity for the veterans to share their experiences with all of us. For family members and friends, to have a chance to try and understand what it was like in World War II. Providing a glimpse in to the hardships that were endured. With gratitude and thanks again for the service generously given by members of the 483rd.

Mark Halebsky

2019 Reunion – Dallas, TX September 19–22, 2019

As discussed in our Business Meeting during last year's reunion, the 483rd Bombardment Group will join other bomb groups of the 15th Air Force for this year's reunion, to be held September 19-22, 2019 in Dallas Texas.

As we discussed last year, we recognize we need to minimize costs on hotel and tours. By partnering with the larger group, we will achieve this goal and meet new friends. We will continue to have our own activities including a private group dinner,

YounGuns, board meetings and our solemn memorial service. However, we will join the larger group banquet and two tours. We agreed to reduce the number of group tours to two tours to minimize fatigue and walking. The two scheduled tours include AT&T Dallas Cowboys Stadium (Friday) and the Frontiers of Flight Museum (Sunday). There are two other excellent venues as optional early-bird tours (Sixth Floor Museum and Bush Memorial Library), but they do not accommodate large groups. More details to follow in the next newsletter.

The hotel is the Wyndham Garden of North Dallas. Due to the hotel's already low rate and an incentive from the municipality of Farmers Branch Texas, we are receiving a special room rate of \$71.20 (per night + taxes) for single, double or ADA accessible rooms.

Reserve your room online now by using the link below:

<https://www.wyndhamhotels.com/groups/gn/bombardment-reunion-20191>

Or, you may also reserve by calling Reservations Manager Kharin Hanes at the hotel's in-house reservations desk. Call (214) 239-3654 Monday-Friday between the hours of 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Central Standard Time.

- Mention you are reserving with "Bombardment Reunion 2019" to receive the group rate.
- If you have mobility issues, ask Kharin for a room with the shortest walking distance to the hotel lobby.
- If you need an ADA accessible room, be sure to ask.
- If you have these or any other special requests, you must ask otherwise they will not know how to help you.

Reservations must be made by August 16, 2019. Reservations after that date are NOT guaranteed at

the group rate and are subject to room availability. Please make your reservations before that date and if you need to cancel for any reason, you may do so without penalty if you cancel by 6:00 PM CST on the day before your arrival.

- The group rate is available between September 16 - 24, 2019.
- A full, hot breakfast buffet for two is included with each room. Additional persons in a room may purchase the buffet for only \$5 per person.
- Parking is plentiful and complimentary.
- The hotel shuttle is available for BOTH Love Field and DFW airports.

Here is a tentative rundown of our itinerary:

Thursday, September 19, 2019

Arrival and Check-In Day. Registration desk and hospitality room is open from mid-morning. Deli sandwiches, various snacks and drinks provided throughout the day.

6:30PM -- An optional informal welcome dinner (most likely an Italian buffet with extra help to carry plates for our folks) followed by a short welcome and information meeting. The mayor of Farmers Branch will welcome our group. The hospitality room will reopen after the dinner meeting.

Friday, September 20, 2019

9:00AM -- Depart the hotel to tour AT&T Cowboys Stadium, have lunch, and return to the hotel by 3:00PM. <http://attstadium.com/tours> [Optional alternative on your own: Bush Presidential Center and Sixth Floor museum at Dealy Plaza]

5:00PM -- Private Social Hour (cash bar)

6:00PM -- Dinner for our individual 483rd Bombardment Group

Saturday, September 21, 2019

Time TBD: Morning: Board Meetings

Time TBD: Ladies' Brunch and Crafts Demo

Time TBD: Veterans and Guest Speaker Presentations. Veterans are invited to share their experiences and stories. Let Reunion Chairman Jay Clifton know if you would like to make a presentation. We'll have 15-minute bathroom

breaks between each session and lunch break of 1-1 ½ hours at mid-day.

5:00PM -- Photo Session

5:15PM -- All Groups Social Hour (cash bar)

6:00PM -- Banquet Dinner

7:00PM -- Musical entertainment provided by Ladies for Liberty (Andrews Sisters type USO show) <http://ladiesforliberty.com/about/>

8:30PM -- Program ends, hospitality room reopens.

Sunday, September 22, 2019

8:30AM -- Optional Church Service

10:00AM -- Military Memorial Ceremony

11:00AM -- 483rd Bombardment Group Memorial Service

1:00PM -- Depart hotel for tour of Frontiers of Flight Museum <https://www.flightmuseum.com/>

4:00PM -- Depart the Frontiers of Flight Museum for return to the hotel

6:00PM -- Informal "Farewell Fajitas" Dinner; hospitality room reopens after dinner

About the tours:

AT&T Dallas Cowboys Stadium



Whether you're a sports fan or not, this place is amazing to see as the premier arena in the country. We have arranged for the "Tour and Dine" package, a one-and-a-half-hour private tour that will take us throughout the entire stadium. We will have the ability to see a couple of the club areas, suites, the beautiful Cotton Bowl offices, the Cowboys and cheerleader locker rooms, and going onto the playing field. Does anyone want to kick a field goal? Afterwards, the stadium staff will lead our group into the beautiful Stadium Club. In the five-star restaurant, they will provide a suite-style luncheon and make sure that everyone is completely satisfied with the meal. Everybody will also receive a drink ticket for the bar so that they may have a drink of his/her choice, plus the bar stays open as a cash bar for the duration of your time there. Our group will

have the Stadium Club for approximately two hours. Note: All areas are ADA wheelchair accessible and wheelchairs will be available.

Frontiers of Flight Museum

We will experience the stories of aviation and space flight – from the Wright Flyer to the one-of-a-kind Flying Pancake; the Apollo VII spacecraft, 13 historical galleries, and over 35,000 artifacts; the Living History program and the acclaimed STEM education program. The Frontiers of Flight Museum is the perfect place to explore the history and progress of aviation as mankind continues to pursue going higher, faster and farther.



Membership News

Comrades:

I collected only \$200 in dues in January – that’s it! Since the inactive members do not read my articles, I am sending this message to the life members and honorary members.

Please send me a donation since the inactive members do not respond to my plea for dues. I don’t see how we can continue to survive without any income. Please, we need your help.



Guy

TAPS – Deceased Members Not Previously Reported in Newsletter			
Name	Squad	Date	Reported By
ANDERSON, HOMER R	816	10/31/2018	BRUCE COOGLER
ANDERSON, MARION CARL		1/18/2019	GUY VENIER (OBIT)
ELLIS, MARION CARL	816	1/8/2019	GUY VENIER (OBIT)
HAMMERSMIDT, FRANKLIN	815	10/21/2018	GUY VENIER (OBIT)
LANEAR, EDDIE K	816	4/24/2017	BRUCE COOGLER
WHITE, HAROLD I	815	2/2/2019	JAY CLIFTON
GIBSON, WILLIAM	840	2/28/2019	SANDEE MAEDA

“Thirty Seconds over Chester: The Night the Pump Station was Bombed”

By Col Eddie Boxx

Mr. Josh David recently mentioned an incredible story about the aerial bombardment of the Gulf Oil pumping station in Chester, Texas. As a former military aviator, I was immediately intrigued yet somewhat skeptical. But after a quick fact check, the quiet East Texas hamlet of Chester was in indeed mistaken for a bomb range by an army aircrew. Fortunately, no one was injured in the attack, but the incident understandably shook the station clerk and the local residents. According to Josh, “half them were running for cover (and being East Texans) the other half were running for their guns to return fire.” In early 1943, Garland Hayes, night shift dispatcher for the Gulf Oil Corporation in Houston, was the first to realize something was wrong in Chester. “Sometime between 1 and 3 a.m., I could not contact the Chester Pumping Station for the hourly report via telegraph. I contacted upstream and downstream

stations and determined that Chester station was still operating normally. I contacted my immediate supervisors who started people from other points investigating. Meantime, after approximately two hours, the clerk at Chester Station called and informed us that an airplane had dropped a bomb on the west end of the station building.” The pumping station took a direct hit and the practice bomb passed through the roof and cratered the concrete floor. Luckily, a quick-thinker realized the pumping station lights had attracted the plane and got them turned off before the plane completed another run. Hayes notes the bomb almost hit a fuel supply and generator and thus barely avoided a catastrophic pipeline fire. Afterwards, then Chester resident Barbara R. (age 5) still remembers her grandfather Dietrich showing her and her brother the gaping hole in the ceiling of the building.

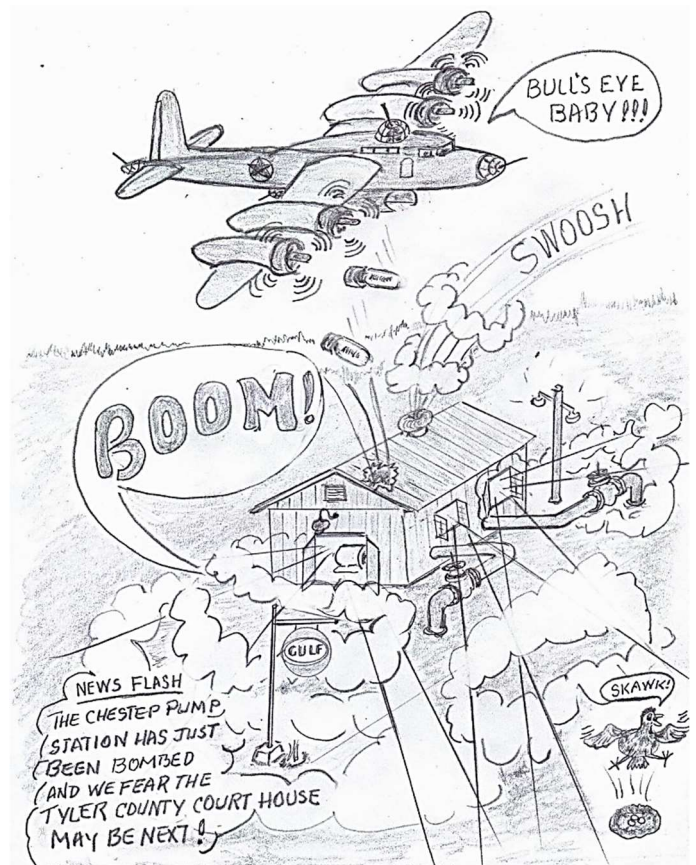
The Army Air Force bomber of course did not intentionally hit the pipeline pumping station, as the planned target was a short 20 nautical miles to the

east in what is now the Boykin Springs Recreational area. During the 1940's (well before the creation of the Sam Rayburn reservoir), the military maintained a small airfield and practice bombing range approximately 5 miles south of the recreation area. According to the National Forest Service, the target area is only visible to the keen observer but still includes casing and shell fragments. Initially it was thought the bomber must have originated from Ellington Field near Houston. Known then as "the Bombardment Academy of the Air" it was the primary training location for bombardiers. However, after a call to friend and current commander of Ellington's 147th Attack Wing Col Matt Barker, he quickly (and emphatically I may add) assured me the bomber did not belong to Ellington Field. After additional (and still on-going) research, the likely originating airbase was Louisiana's Alexandria Army Air Force Base (later renamed England Air Force Base and closed in 1992). In the aftermath of the bomb run, Mr. Hayes was kept busy with phone calls from the War Department and senior officers from Barksdale Airfield in Shreveport (then headquarters to army air force aviation in Louisiana) and responsible for the Alexandria aircrew. Additionally the Boykin Springs range belonged to the Alexandria-based units and followed the same azimuth from the Louisiana airfield. Once the bomber took off, both the intended bombing range and Chester are on a 260-degree heading – meaning if the plane continued in a straight line, it would fly over both the military target and the Chester pumping station – the later ultimately proved too tempting of a target for an aircrew in search of a bomb range.

Surprisingly, what happened in 1943 at the Chester pumping station was not an isolated wartime event. In the same year, a B-17 aircrew training at night in Oklahoma mistakenly dropped practice bombs near the Boise City courthouse and First Baptist Church – nearly hitting both buildings. Apparently, the 100 lb. practice bombs (96 percent sand, 4 percent gunpowder) displayed a penchant for tall, well-lit buildings. In Nebraska, the town of Tarnav was also mistaken for a bomb range and its business district was pelted with six practice bombs. Today, both communities wholeheartedly embrace and celebrate their "bombings" with live music, games, food and other events. At their 50th

anniversary, Tarnav hosted a representative from Offutt Air Force Base (who personally apologized for the mistake) and the town recreated the bombing by dropping toilet paper from the sky. Boise City even sought to bring the aircrew back for their celebration (not surprisingly none of the aircrew accepted) but the town has placed a fake bomb in a replica crater at in the town square along with a bronze plaque.

The almost destroyed pipeline still remains operational today (in spite of one determined army air force bomber crew) and the concrete floor of the pumping station still shows the scars of the attack. We can only hope the aircrew improved their night bombing orientation before they deployed to combat, but they were at least proficient at one skill – they could expertly hit the bullseye of a well-lit building in the middle of the dark Piney Woods of Texas.



Cartoon by Mr. Davis Hatton

Authors Note: Col Eddie Boxx, USAF (ret) is a combat aviator and currently researching WWII B-17 training at Alexandria Army Airfield and the airpower lessons and contributions of the 1941 Louisiana Wargames. If you have any information you would like to share, please email him at eddieboxx@hotmail.com.

The Wife of a 483rd Hero

In several newsletters over the past years we've asked for stories regarding what the wives of the 483rd were doing during WWII. Reprinted below is a letter recently received in response to those requests for the wives' stories.

My name is Jim Hodge. My father is Harry Hodge. He is a veteran of the 483rd Bomb Group, 840th Squadron. He was credited with 52 missions with the 483rd in 1944. Dad is 97 years old. After a life of both great integrity and great energy he has begun to suffer dementia in the last two years. Because of this I have recently begun to attend to his affairs. Amongst his papers was a file for the 483rd. He and my mother had attended a number of reunions. I saw your statement inviting the wives of 483rd veterans to send in their experience during those war years. My mother, Jenny Hodge, passed away from complications of Alzheimer's disease in 2006. Following is information about my mother, a young woman first engaged and then married to a 483rd Bomb Group veteran.

I hope this finds you in good health. I thank you and all those that served our nation at that critical time.

Janet (Jenny) Irvine Hodge

My father, Harry Hodge had been invited to a roller skating social by his friend and fellow worker, Jim Irvine sometime in late 1940 or early 41. There he met Jim's 20-year-old sister Jenny. They soon began to date and it was not long before Harry was proposing marriage. My mother, ever the conservative Scottish lassie, had told me that she initially fended off these proposals. Harry received his draft notice in January of 1943. It was then, knowing that he would soon be off to parts unknown, that Jenny realized she truly loved him.

By January of 44, after months of training, Harry, his crew and their B-17 fine-tuned at MacDill Field in Tampa-St. Pete. for the journey ahead. Harry had his mother and Jenny make the bus trip down from Detroit. Here Jenny received her ring and their engagement was on.

Throughout those days of 1944 Jenny continued working the afternoon shift at the Briggs DPC plant on Conner Avenue back in Detroit. Her job - riveting the wing sections for the B-17. Having grown up an active, athletic girl her trim 5'5" size allowed her to

specialize in crawling inside of the wing to rivet near the wing tip. One night a splotch of her hair got clamped between metal sections where she riveted. Only a good yank and the loss of a little hair freed her!

Each midnight when her shift ended Jenny walked home the short distance to her parent's home. Often her mother, and if his work schedule allowed, her father, waited up for her. Sometimes friends would stop by at these late hours and they would all share in the news of loved ones affected by a world at war.

Throughout the war Jenny exchanged letters with her grandmother who lived in Leith, a port city on the edge of Edinburgh. These letters included stories of scrambling to the air raid shelter to find safety from the German Luftwaffe attacks. I have long suspected that, in large part, this knowledge that others were experiencing more hardship than herself made Jenny one to always count her blessings and never wallow in self-pity.

On October 4th of 44 Harry Hodge, having completed 52 bombing missions, hit American soil. During his three-week furlough Jenny and Harry married; the whole thing planned and executed in two weeks. They had time for a four-day honeymoon in Port Huron, Michigan.

Harry's orders now sent him "and wife" to Miami, Florida. His crewmate at the 483rd, John Farrell "and wife", had the same orders. Jenny now found herself put up at the Madison Hotel on Collins Avenue in the heart of Miami Beach. After a couple of weeks both Hodge and Farrell received orders to Laredo Air Base, Laredo, Texas.

Harry took a troop train to Laredo. Farrell got a "delay in route". He, his wife Betty and Jenny returned to Michigan where Farrell had an automobile. The three of them drove down to Laredo in John Farrell's Packard.

Harry became a gunnery instructor at Laredo Air Base. Christmas came and went. In January, Jenny's husband received orders to Westover Air Base in Massachusetts. On the train trip to the east coast Jenny felt sick. She was now expecting her first child.

Harry's orders allowed for off base housing. They responded to an ad for a room at the home of a Baptist minister in Chicopee Falls. During this time Jenny easily found war related work. She sat at a work table with a few other woman putting parts

together for a small item of which she did not know the purpose. One day the woman sitting across from her was called into the management office and was told her husband had been KIA.

After a period of time the couple felt Jenny should return home to Detroit where could be under the watchful care of a doctor and her mother.

In May of that year Germany surrendered and on Sept. 2nd Japan surrendered. On Sept. 26, Harry was separated and he arrived back home to Jenny and a twelve day old son he had yet to see. Jenny must have felt so gratified and excited that her young family was now together. Within a couple hours of Harry's arrival there was a knock on the front door. Jenny opened it and there stood her brother. He had served in the Pacific and had kept his expected return unannounced. On a day already filled with emotion Jenny just sank to the floor in tears.

My mother, Jenny Hodge, shared 62 years of devoted marriage with her husband. She brought three sons into this world. She passed away in August of 2006.

From the Fundraising Coordinator

The 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund is an IRS recognized 501(c)3 organization that will provide a long-term vehicle to continue the goals and purposes of the already existing 483rd Bombardment Group (H) Association. These goals and purposes include, financially supporting the wonderful 483rd display at the Museum of Aviation at Warner Robins Air Force Base in Georgia and providing annual scholarships to college students who are pursuing a future career in military aviation.

Please help us perpetuate the memory of the 483rd Bombardment Group! There are two ways that you can make a charitable contribution:

- You can write a check for the 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund and send it to: Mr. David Raffel, 5951 NW 63rd Terrace #1415, Kansas City, MO 64151.
- You can also go to www.gofundme.com/483rd-bombardment-group-legacy-fund and contribute using your credit card.

If you have any questions, or want more information, contact David at 913-709-3382. Also, please feel free to share this appeal with your family and friends thru e-mail and social media.

*** Donations are tax-deductible. ***

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PAST PRESIDENTS

Phillip A. Luetke (Deceased) 1980
William A. Haskins (Deceased) 1981
James V. Reardon (Deceased) 1982-83
Lynn M. Borders (Deceased) 1984
Joseph W. Gawthrop (Deceased) 1984
M.L. "Bob" Hottman 1985 (Deceased)
Harry K. Keller (Deceased) 1986
Donald R. Speegle (Deceased) 1987
James "Russ" Heflin (Deceased) 1988
Evan M. "Jack" Edwards (Deceased) 1989
Ralph H. Simpson (Deceased) 1990
Harry P. Millnamow (Deceased) 1991
William P. Dunn (Deceased) 1992
Edward T. Cotton (Deceased) 1993
Harry D. Whye (Deceased) 1994
Ray H. Whitaker (Deceased) 1995
Harold D. Leveridge (Deceased) 1996
William I. Jeffs (Deceased) 1997
George F. Stovall 1998 (Deceased)
John A. Campbell (Deceased) 1999
Verne H. Cole (Deceased) 2000
Benjamin H. Adams Jr. (Deceased) 2001
Robert W. Mitchell (Deceased) 2002
John P. Nobel (Deceased) 2003
Curtis B. Clark 2004
Fredric A. Hicks (Deceased) 2005
Wilfrid Hebert (Deceased) 2006
Stanton "Mike" Rickey 2007
Ellis Maxey (Deceased) 2008
Jim Ashley (Deceased) 2009
Dennis West 2010, 2011, 2012
Sandee West Maeda 2013, 2014, 2015
Harold Chubbs 2016
Dennis West 2017
Russell Daniel 2018

BOMB GROUPS REUNION

September 19—22, 2019 Dallas, Texas



Name _____ Group 483rd Squadron _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Names as they are to appear on name tags: _____

Registration fee (except veterans) # people _____ @ \$25.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH—Welcome dinner, Italian Buffet

people _____ @ @28.50 Sub Total \$ _____

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH—Tour AT&T Dallas Cowboys Stadium with gourmet lunch & drinks

people _____ @ \$85.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Individual Group Dinners

Grilled Filet 10oz. # people _____ @ \$37.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Grilled Salmon # people _____ @ \$28.50 each Sub Total \$ _____

Eggplant Parmesan # people _____ @ \$28.50 each Sub Total \$ _____

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST

All Groups Banquet

New York Strip 12 Oz # people _____ @ \$34.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Rosemary Lemon Chicken # people _____ @ \$28.50 each Sub Total \$ _____

Vegetarian Tart (Chef's Choice of Veggies) # people _____ @ \$28.50 each Sub Total \$ _____

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22ND

Lunch on your own today. Tour in afternoon

Tour Frontiers of Flight Museum # people _____ @ \$29.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Farewell Dinner—Farewell Fajitas # people _____ @ \$30.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Do you need a wheelchair? Yes _____ No _____ GRAND TOTAL \$ _____

Emergency Contact _____ Phone # _____

Please send this form along with your check payable to Jay Clifton:
Jay Clifton 7589 Bittersweet Drive, Gurnee IL 60031