



483RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION

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

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President's Message

Dear 483rd Members,

I am proud to start my term as your new president of the 483rd Bombardment Group Association. My wife Nancy and I joined the group in 2006, when we traveled with my father-in-law Ken Hoffman to the 28th Reunion in Washington DC. In these past 14 years we have nurtured friendships with our cherished veterans and their families. Our only regret is that we did not get involved earlier in the Association, but we were raising our three children, now adults, who have blessed us with three beautiful grandchildren.

I have also accepted the privilege to serve for a third time as the chairman for our 42nd Reunion. Our 41st Reunion recently held in Dallas was the first combined reunion with the 15th Air Force. We discussed pros/cons and I solicited recommendations for future combined reunions. I have shared our group's feedback with the 15th Air Force reunion committee and promise to correct those issues.

For the 2020 Reunion site, we have selected Albuquerque, New Mexico. The most likely dates will be September 10-13, 2020. I realize we had a reunion in Albuquerque just five years ago, but this location is highly recommended by our committee. The proposed venue is the Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown. This is a highly rated hotel and the staff clearly understand military reunions and our unique needs. For those who may want shopping and dining off property, this place is in the middle of the Uptown district. I will provide details about tours and itinerary in the Spring Newsletter.

As I type the year 2020 and realize we are about to enter a new decade, I am amazed how time flies. I particularly think about our veterans, most who

were born in the 1920's. It is astonishing to consider the amount of change these folks have experienced going into their eleventh decade. I enjoy history and loved the book "The Greatest Generation" by Tom Brokaw. He wrote: "They came of age during the Great Depression and the Second World War and went on to build modern America – men and women whose everyday lives of duty, honor, achievement, and courage gave us the world we have today."

I am fortunate to have traveled the world on business and recently returned from my fifth trip to China. I wish all Americans could visit a communist country to truly appreciate America's freedom and standard of living. I am an optimist and realize we are blessed to have our freedom because of The Greatest Generation. Let's continue to treasure these men and women and honor their legacy.

Jay Clifton



From the Newsletter Editor

I have been attempting to gather copies of all previous newsletters, but I'm missing several. If you happen to have a copy of any of the listed newsletters, I would appreciate you sending a copy to me:

| Volume | No. | Month | Volume | No. | Month |
|--------|-----|---------|--------|-----|--------|
| 10 | 3 | Jun-90 | 18 | 2 | Jun-98 |
| 11 | 1 | Mar-91? | 18 | 3 | Sep-98 |
| 11 | 3 | Aug-91? | 21 | 3 | Sep-00 |
| 12 | 2 | Jun-92 | 21 | 4 | Dec-00 |
| 13 | 3 | Aug-92 | | | |

| TAPS – Deceased Members Not Previously Reported in Newsletter | | | |
|---|-------|----------|------------------|
| Name | Squad | Date | Reported By |
| GERHARDT, KYLE D. | 816 | 6/3/2019 | RUTH C. GERHARDT |

Membership News

Dear Comrades:

For the last several months, dues have almost come to a complete stop. I don't know how much longer we will be able to survive if this trend continues. With so many Life Members, Inactive Members, Honorary Life Members who have not paid any dues or made any donations during this past year. Let us hope that things may change for the better this coming year. As for me, I will be making a Christmas Donation of \$200 this month.

Take care,

Guy Venier
Membership Secretary



Dues, or Lack Of!

In November 2004, the Board of Directors voted to increase the annual dues from \$15 to \$25, the first since inception 26 years before. At the same time, the Board decided to retain the life membership at \$100 but proposed that all life members could volunteer donations to the treasury. Since my term as treasurer, I have volunteered a couple of additional \$100 life memberships, which I credit to my longevity. If everyone would donate an additional \$100 periodically, this would help us continue the Warner Robins Museum Fund, cadet scholarships, and other business of the 483rd. All donations will be greatly appreciated! You may send donations to me at the address listed on the last page of this newsletter.

Thank you,
Leon Waldman
Treasurer

Did You Know?

This section contains reprints of selected stories and other interesting information from newsletters published during the past years and other 483rd BG publications.

TAPS

Submitted by Dennis West

It all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia.

The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moan of a soldier who lay mortally wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through gunfire, the captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment. When the captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The captain lit a lantern. Suddenly, he caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, he enlisted in the Confederate Army. The following morning, heartbroken the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial despite his enemy status. His request was partially granted. The captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for the son at the funeral. That request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. Out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of his dead son's uniform. This wish was granted. This music was the haunting melody we now know as "Taps" that is used at all military funerals.

In case you are interested, these are the words to "Taps":

Day is done, Gone the sun, From the lakes, From the hills, From the sky. All is well. Safely rest. God is nigh.

GROUND SUPPORT DUTIES IN THE MEDICAL UNIT

*By George Seth (840th) and the Newsletter Staff
(Vol. 11, No. 4, December 1991, pages 6-8)*

About 1 AM one night in August 1944 an Aircraft Mechanic stopped at the Squadron Medical Tent after readying his plane for the next morning's Mission, he said to the Medic on duty, "I know this is late to make sick call, but my pain is so bad I can't wait until morning." The Medical Specialist replied, "You fellows on the flight line have your pride in keeping your planes in tip-top shape, and we men on the Medical Team are no different when it comes to keeping you in good health. Let's take a look at your problem."

The examination showed an acute colitis condition. The Officer of the Day was notified and he ordered hospitalization. The Medical Technician turned to the Aircraft Mechanic and said, "You are on your way to the Sixth Field Hospital at San Severo." And he set the established procedure in motion by awakening the Ambulance Driver and a replacement to take over the Medical Charge of Quarters duties, and away they went along the bumpy back road to San Severo where two weeks later the patient was returned to duty.

This was not an unusual incident in the Medical Section's routine. The staff assigned to this essential duty consisted of a Flight Surgeon and eight enlisted men for each Squadron, plus a Supervisory Staff at Headquarters.

Like everyone else, the day started early for those serving on the Medical Team. The Flight Surgeon was awakened at "H" hour to attend briefing and then picked up after briefing by the Ambulance Crew (2 men) and driven to the control tower for takeoff. When takeoff was completed, they returned to the Squadron area for breakfast and sick call where treatment was provided for such every day ailments as colds, foot fungus, headaches, "GIs", indigestion, muscular injuries, and infected cuts exposed to the lead in aviation fuel.

When sick call had been completed, the Flight Surgeon would go into the Field Hospital at San Severo to check on the Squadron's patients. Meanwhile, patients who has been placed on the "unfit for duty" list and did not require hospitalization, but who were invalided due to combat wounds or maintenance injuries, would report to the Medical Tent for treatment by the Medical Specialists for such disorders as Gastro-enteritis; Aerotitis Media;

replacement of dressings; and daily doses of medications.

Replenishing medical supplies was a never-ending task as was record keeping. Such items as antibiotics; plasma; morphine and morphine syrettes; vaccines for Typhus, Cholera, Tetanus, Yellow Fever, Small Pox; and other diseases all had to be kept at the prescribed inventory levels.

Accurate records for each member were kept up to date by the Medical Staff. Recording of periodic immunization shots for each individual in both Flight Crews and Ground Support Personnel, as well as injuries and illness, was a constant duty along with the Daily Status Report for the Orderly Room and Headquarters.

When it was time for the aircraft to return from the day's Mission, the Ambulance Crew returned to the control tower where it remained until all aircraft had landed. Landing mishaps were shared with the Crash Crew. The wounded were treated at the site or at the hardstand if not too seriously injured.

Sterparone, being located in a heavily infected Malaria region required constant supervision of the troops to see that they took their daily tablet of Atabrine. Also, it was routine to make frequent inspections of the Mess Hall facilities by the Medical Technicians.

In the documentary publication of the Army Air Force "Army Air Forces in World War II-Vol. 7" this statement is made: "in an air weapons system this principle applies — the human factor is "equal" in importance to the condition of the airplane. Members of Flight Crews and Ground Support Personnel rapidly develop into a team that results in mutual interdependence, mutual responsibility, and mutual loyalty."

And the 483rd's Medical Team fully verified the above declaration.

*** Fundraising Appeal ***

This Holiday season we give thanks for many things in our lives --- including our freedom & democracy. Without the courage of the American military in World War II, including the 483rd Bombardment Group, we may not be here to enjoy the fruits of their sacrifice.

The 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund is dedicated to preserving the memory & the legacy of the heroic men who bravely comprised this B-17 bomb

group during World War II. Without their determination and sacrifice the World War II may not have had the same outcome as it did.

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.

We are asking you to consider making an end-of-year contribution to the 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund to help us continue their legacy! 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, 612 Central Street Apt #102, Kansas City, MO 64105.
- 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 Dave Raffel at DaveRaffel@Gmail.com. Also, please feel free to share this appeal with your family and friends thru e-mail and social media.

THANK YOU, and HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

*** 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, 2017
 Sandee West Maeda 2013, 2014, 2015
 Harold Chubbs 2016
 Russell Daniel 2018
 Mark Halebsky 2019