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483RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION

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

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NUMBER 2

President's Message

Greetings to all! We are so grateful that the global pandemic may be behind us. Our annual reunion in 2020 was postponed, but it is scheduled this year from September 9-12, 2021, at the same venue in Albuquerque New Mexico. Nancy and I look forward to reuniting with the 483rd Bombardment Group. As always, we encourage veterans and their families to attend the reunion including second, third and fourth generations!

Detailed information about the Reunion follows in the Publicity Chairman's report. There is also a website "Reunion" tab with easy buttons for Sheraton Hotel Reservation, 2021 Reunion Itinerary, Reunion Events and Activities, Reunion Registration Form:

https://15thaf.org/5th_BW/483rd_BG/Reunion/Reunion.html

Nancy and I continue to enjoy our grandchildren and we welcomed our fourth grandchild, a healthy girl, in April. We are incredibly happy to visit with our extended family

after so many months of separation. I was able to take my father-in-law Ken Hoffman to Iowa to meet his great granddaughters and we fished in a pristine trout stream that flows eastward to the Mississippi River. Our son Eric's wedding is the weekend following the reunion so September will be a busy month.

I hope all of you are keeping healthy and living life to the fullest. We are blessed to be part of the 483rd family. I am proud to continue to serve as your 483rd Bombardment Group President. Please contact me with any questions or suggestions or just have a friendly chat. Happy Summer!

*Jay Clifton,
President*



From the Publicity Chairman

2021 Bomb Groups Reunion is on!

Only about 3 months until our 42nd reunion. It will be so wonderful to see everyone again! As in 2019, this year's reunion will be in conjunction with the 15th Air Force Bomb Groups Reunion.

The reunion is going to be in Albuquerque, New Mexico from Thursday, September 9 through Sunday, September 12, 2021. It will be held at **The Sheraton Uptown Hotel** located at 2600

Louisiana Blvd NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110.

Room rates are \$118 per night plus tax. Room includes a full, hot breakfast buffet for 2 per room; due to current government restrictions, if a buffet is not allowed, plated breakfasts will be substituted. Eleven ADA accessible rooms are available. If you have any special requests or needs, please make your reservation by phone calling the sales office at (505) 830-5781 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (MST) Monday-Friday. Please

mention Bomb Group Reunion to receive the group rate. Otherwise, if you have no special requests or needs, please reserve your room online at the following web address:

<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1619625533251&key=GRP&app=resvlink>

Room rates are good from September 7 - September 15, 2021.

Reunion Tours -

Friday, September 10, 2021

We will be touring the **New Mexico Veterans Memorial** which is a special place that pays tribute to veterans of the past, honoring those who currently serve our country and inspiring future service men and women. The City of Albuquerque built this memorial with open space, landscapes, sculptures, museum, and meeting space to celebrate loved ones who have sacrificed to make our country and the world a better place. There will be so much to see and enjoy here.



The bus will drop you off just outside of the Visitor's Center, right next to the World War II

section of the grounds. The total memorial grounds are expansive so you can explore and visit as few or as many of the sections as you choose. Seating throughout the park to stop for a break is plentiful. We will also have many wheelchairs on hand for our veterans.



The visitor's center is like a small museum in itself so be sure to allow time to explore inside!

While at the Visitor's Center we will gather in the meeting room for a box lunch with-out the box! From there we will move to the courtyard that is just outside "in back" of the meeting room for our Military Memorial Ceremony conducted by our Reunion Chaplain, Captain Chris Cairns, who is an active-duty Army Chaplain whose Grandfather, Col. Douglas Cairns was the final commanding officer of the 485th BG.

Following the tour and Memorial Ceremony we will be treated to an open house on Kirtland Air Force base hosted by active-duty members of the **512th Rescue Squadron at Kirtland Air Force Base**, whose lineage takes them back to the 376th BG. This squadron was formed during World War II as the 512th Bombardment Squadron in the Middle East in 1942 to reinforce the Royal Air Force in North Africa with personnel and aircraft diverted from delivery to the China Burma India Theater. The squadron moved forward eventually being stationed in Italy, where it participated in the strategic bombing campaign against Germany and was awarded three Distinguished Unit Citations for its combat actions. Following V-E Day, the squadron returned to the United States, where it converted to Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers but was inactivated in March 1946. The squadron was redesignated the 512th Reconnaissance Squadron and activated in 1947 as a weather reconnaissance unit and continued the reconnaissance mission until February 1951. The squadron returned to the bombardment mission later in 1951 and was upgraded to Boing B-47 Stratojet bombers in 1954 and was inactivated in 1965. In 1994 it was activated as the 512th Special Operations Squadron and assumed its mission of training helicopter aircrews.

Sunday, September 12, 2021

After a stop at Furr's Fresh Buffet for a delicious lunch we will visit **The National Museum of Nuclear Science & History**. This museum was created in 1969 to tell the story of the Kirtland Base and the development of nuclear weapons. In 1973, the museum



name was changed to National Atomic Museum to reflect the growing national and international audience and the fact that it was the only public museum that preserved the history of the nuclear industry. Due to heightened security measures at the Base, the museum closed its doors at Kirtland AFB on September 11, 2001. The National Atomic Museum then opened in its Old Town location on May 11, 2002 and was located there until February 7, 2009. The museum was renamed The National Museum of Nuclear Science & History in April 2009 and located in its present location in southwest Albuquerque.



The full reunion agenda is as follows:

Thursday, 9/09 Arrival and Check in Day

Registration desk and hospitality room is open from mid-morning. There will be deli sandwiches, various snacks and drinks throughout the day.

6:15 PM - An optional informal welcome dinner (beef and chicken enchiladas) followed by a short welcome and information meeting.

7:15 PM - A greeting time and informal informational meeting.

The hospitality room will reopen after the dinner meeting until?

Friday, 9/10

9:00 AM - Depart the hotel to tour New Mexico Veterans Memorial with lunch and Military Memorial Ceremony at the Veterans Memorial. Afternoon visit to the 512th Squadron at Kirtland Air Force Base for an open house and aircraft and equipment displays. Possible 9/11 remembrance ceremony on base.

3:00 PM - Return to hotel

5:00 PM - Social hour for Individual Group Dinners (483rd BG) beginning with a cash bar at about 5:00 PM.

6:00 PM - Dinner is served. *Hospitality room is CLOSED between 5:00PM – 7:30PM*

Hospitality room will reopen after the Individual Group Dinners and remain open until?

Saturday, 9/11

8:30 – 9:45 AM - Ladies Crafts Demo

10:00 AM - 4:00 PM - Veterans Presentations today. Individual speaker times TBD but will have about a 15-minute bathroom break in between each session and lunch break of about 1 1/2 hours at mid-day.

5:00 PM - Veterans group picture taking. Location TBD.

5:15 PM - All Groups Banquet Social Hour; Cash bar opens.

6:00 PM - Dinner is served. *Hospitality room is CLOSED between 5:15PM – 8:30PM*

7:00 PM - Entertainment provided by Bob Hope, aka Bill Johnson.

8:30 PM - Program ends, hospitality room reopens until?

Sunday, 9/12

9:00 AM - Optional Church Service

10:30 AM - 483rd BGA Private Military Memorial Ceremony

1:00 PM - Depart hotel for tour of The National Museum of Nuclear Science & History

3:30 PM - Depart the museum for return to the hotel.

6:00 PM - Informal Farewell dinner. Hospitality room reopens after dinner until?

You will find the reunion registration form attached to this newsletter or you can go to our website at the link shown in the “President’s Message” section of this newsletter, so fill it out and send it in as soon as possible. I look forward to having as many people as possible attend our 42nd Reunion.

Sandee Maeda
Publicity Chairman

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.

Down Memory Lane - Convoy Air Raid

By: Clyde Barnes

(reprinted from 483rd Newsletter, Vol 15, No 3, September 1995, pages 5-7)

April Fool's Day 1944

On April 1, 1944, a day and a half after passing the Rock of Gibraltar and entering the Mediterranean Sea, German Air Force bombers paid the convoy carrying the 483rd's Surface Echelon a visit. At about 4:00 a.m. the ship's air raid alarm sounded and as prior practice drills required, all passengers remained in their bunks except those men of the Armament and Ordnance Sections who had been assigned to assist the Naval Gun Crews. These men rushed to their designated posts as the ship's antiaircraft guns and small arms began firing.

During the 28 day voyage between the Port of Embarkation in Virginia and the Port of Debarkation, Brindizi, Italy, members of the Armament and Ordnance Sections had stood duty watches of 4 hours on and 8 hours off with the Naval Gun Crews. Those assigned to the 50 cal. machine guns were shown how to load and clear them during an air attack. Other members of Ordnance and Armament Sections were assigned to pass ammunition from storage vaults below decks to those firing the three and one half inch anti-aircraft guns in the ship's bow and stem sections. 483rd men were also assigned to operate the Oerlikon anti-aircraft guns located at each of the four corners of the ship's bridge and the four 50 ca. machine guns - two on each side (about mid-ship) of the main deck.

Those men restricted to the Troop Quarters (forward cargo hold) were unable to see what was taking place and most could only visualize what would happen should a bomb drop into the crowded compartment containing about 600 men. Men of the Ordnance and Armament Sections after being relieved of their assigned duties relayed to those who had been restricted below decks, what they had witnessed while on deck. The "All Clear" was given

about two and a half hours after the first attack was made.

Stukas Attack Convoy

The raid consisted of three separate attacks during the alert which lasted until daybreak. In each case witnesses said there were so many parachute flares released over the convoy that the surface of the sea was almost as bright as during daylight. Bombing by the Luftwaffe was from both medium bombers flying in formation at about 10,000 ft. and dive bombers which also strafed the ships as they came down. By 6:30 a.m. (dawn) two bombers had been knocked down and two supply ships had been hit, causing fires in their cargo holds. The two damaged ships left the convoy and headed for North African ports for repairs.

4th of July on April Fool's Day

One of the Armament men (Ted Merrill, 817th) said that for a very short while the parachute flares and anti-aircraft shells exploding over the convoy reminded him of a 4th of July celebration, but he quickly realized this was the real thing and as he ran to his assignment at the forward gun position, a plane dived at his ship. The ship's searchlight crew picked up the diving plane and it was welcomed with streams of tracer-laced machine and Oerlikon gun fire. Those on deck expected to see a bomb hit the ship but as the dive bomber was hit by defensive fire, it veered off and no bomb was released. It was reported the plane exploded before hitting the sea.

Anyone serving in the defense of the ship could accept and understand what was taking place, but those who had to remain in Troop Quarters in the cargo hold could only imagine what was happening based on hearing the firing of anti-aircraft shells, the bark of the Oerlikons, the spasmodic rattle of the 50s and the roar of aircraft engines. Added to this pandemonium was a bomb aimed at the SS Lincoln Steffens carrying the 840th Squadron. The bomb fell into the sea just behind the ship's aft section and after exploding upon hitting the water, it lifted the ship's stern clear of the sea, thus releasing the load on the propeller, allowing it to run free for a few seconds. This created an excessive vibration throughout the ship, producing the impression that the ship had been hit. Vibrations ceased when the aft section returned to its normal position in the sea.

When the "All Clear" signal was given (just after daybreak) all who had remained in Troop Quarters

rushed on deck to see and hear about what they had listened to below deck. The only evidence was two smoke columns on the horizon from the two supply ships hit during the raid.

From Brindisi to Sterparone - 1944

By Newsletter Staff

*(reprinted from 483rd Newsletter, Vol 13, No 1,
March 1993, pages 3-4)*

When the Surface Echelon of the 483rd Bomb Group reached its Port of Debarkation Brindisi - in April 1944, we were unaware that this old city was the most famous of all of the Roman Empire's P.O.E. for its Legions and supplies for the far-flung territories it had conquered. It had also served as the foremost P.O.E. during the years of the Crusades. But the 483rd B.G. changed all that when it used it as its Port of Debarkation.

When the convoy docked along a very old stone wharf, we were welcomed by a single citizen - a frolicking 10-year-old boy, who raced along the wharf, waving his arms and shouting, "Paesano! Paesano!" When Lou Pellegrini (840th) who spoke Italian very well was asked what he was saying, Lou said he was welcoming us as fellow countrymen.

We were formed up to leave the ship, the canteens filled with fresh water and issued three "K" rations to see us through the rail journey to our new base. After debarkation we marched (at route step) with loaded barrack bags through some of the city streets to the rail marshalling yard and climbed into freight cars of the 40 & 8 vintage of WWI. It was at this stage of our trip that vino merchants appeared. Vino was for sale (at very low prices - cigarettes) but only if a G.I. emptied his canteen. Glass bottles were among the many shortages existing in Italy at the time. The emptying of the canteens was an act that many would regret before morning.

Because the troops were crowded into the rail cars, there was little room to sit or lie down. Ted Merrill (817th) recalls that when dusk arrived, he felt tired and laid down in a corner for a nap. Later when he awakened there was one set of legs across his chest and another set across his lower legs, and a terrible odor. Some of those who had traded water for the low-grade vino had found their stomachs could not handle the vino and had been unable to reach the doorway for relief.

The rail trip was interminable with many stops, layovers on sidings and other marshalling yards along the way with arrival at the bombed-out station at San Severo about 24 hours after debarkation, about 160 miles south, for an average speed of about 6 2/3 miles per hour.

Soon after unloading from the 40 & 8s, 2 1/2 ton trucks began to arrive (driven by U.S. Corps of Engineers). The trucks were loaded with standing G.I.'s and their gear for the eight mile "kidney busting" ride to the center of a huge wheat field where we were told to unload. Looking around, the only thing in sight was a huge haystack about 20 feet high and about 100 ft. long. "This is your new home, welcome to Sterparone" said the truck driver, with a smile.

***** Fundraising Appeal *****

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.

We are asking you to consider contributing to the 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund to help us continue their legacy.

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: 3820 NE 91st Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64156.

You can also go to: www.483rdLegacyFund.org/ and contribute using your credit card.

Please feel free to share this appeal with your family and friends through e-mail and social media. If

you have any questions, or want more information, contact David at 913-709-3382.

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

*** Support the 483rd in Your Estate Plan ***

You can provide vital financial support for the 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund even after you're gone, so that we can continue our mission of perpetuating the legacy of our heroes from the Greatest Generation.

This can be done by a "bequest" in your estate plan. A bequest is a gift from your estate, made by including language in your will or living trust, that names the 483rd Bombardment Legacy Fund as a beneficiary. The bequest can be made as a specific dollar amount, percentage of your estate, or specific property.

Here is some sample bequest language:

"I, (your name), of (your city, state, zip), give, devise, and bequest to the 483rd Bombardment Group Legacy Fund (specific dollar amount, percentage of your estate, or specific property) to be used towards fulfilling the mission of the organization."

Whatever amount you would consider giving would make a huge difference in our long-term efforts. Your bequest will not only keep our organization vibrant, but it will also help us perpetuate the legacy of the 483rd at the Museum of Aviation at Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins, Georgia. We also will be distributing annual scholarships to ROTC students pursuing careers in military aviation.

For more information on how this can be done, we encourage you to consult with your personal accountant or estate planning attorney. If we can also be of help to you in achieving your planned giving goals for the 483rd, please feel free to contact Dave Raffel at DaveRaffel@Gmail.com

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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 (Deceased) 2016
Russell Daniel 2018
Mark Halebsky 2019
Jay Clifton 2020

BOMB GROUPS REUNION

September 9—12, 2021 Albuquerque, NM



Veteran/Fallen Hero _____ Group 483rd Sqdn _____ Highest Rank _____
Registrant Name: _____ (One Form per Registration Packet)
Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____
Name Tag Names (Include Veteran Relationship): _____

Registration fee (except veterans) # people _____ @ \$15.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH—Welcome dinner, Christmas Enchiladas. Beef & Chicken enchiladas covered with red and green chili. # people _____ @ \$38.00 Sub Total \$ _____

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH— NM Veterans Memorial Tour, lunch and Memorial Ceremony and visit to Kirtland AFB # people _____ @ \$65.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Individual Group Dinners

Roast Beef # people _____ @ \$40.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Chicken Corona # people _____ @ \$40.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Vegetarian Lasagna # people _____ @ \$40.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH

All Groups Banquet

Carved Prime Rib # people _____ @ \$50.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Seared Salmon Filet # people _____ @ \$50.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Basil Olive Risotto & Grilled Vegetables # people _____ @ \$50.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH

Lunch and tour of the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History

people _____ @ \$65.00 each Sub Total \$ _____

Farewell Dinner — BBQ Brisket & Chicken, Beans & Potatoes

people _____ @ \$31.00 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 7589 Bittersweet Drive, Gurnee IL 60031

Registrations must be received by September 1, 2021. No changes may be made after that date.