
Report of the 1997 Reunion

The highlight of the 1997 reunion was the dedication of the plaque and tree in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia. Shortly after the dedication of the 484th plaque at the Air Force Museum Memorial Park in Dayton, Ohio, the Association officers were alerted by Ben Franklin of the 15th AF Association that Arlington National Cemetery was extending the opportunity to veterans organizations to plant memorial trees at Arlington. Inasmuch as there were funds available from the generous contributions of our members to the first 484th memorial plaque and tree, and with the approval of the membership at members' annual meeting, contact was made with the appropriate officials at Arlington for the installation of the Ginkgo tree and a newly designed and approved 484th plaque at site 33 in Arlington National Cemetery.

The dedication of the 484th Bomb Group's plaque and tree took place on Friday, September 12, 1997 at 10 o'clock AM. The weather cooperated and contrary to the overcast skies of the previous two days, the sun shone on our ceremony.

The Ceremony

The guests were welcomed by our local member, Fred Dierksmeier, followed by the posting of the colors by the uniformed Air Force Honor Guard Color Team from Bolling AFB, D.C., the invocation was given by Chaplain Maj. Steven A Schaick, USAF Staff Chaplain, Arlington National Cemetery. The President of the Association Bud Markel addressed the dedication of the 484th Memorial Plaque and Ginkgo Tree at Site #33 in Arlington National Cemetery. The plaque was then unveiled by Bud Pressel, 825th Sq., and a red, white and blue floral wreath was presented and placed alongside the plaque by members, Adolph Marcus, 824th Sq, and Aurelio Lopez, 825 Sq. Historian, Tom Sherlock, accepted the tree and memorial plaque on behalf of Arlington National Cemetery, and also commended the group on the unusually large number of attendees at this dedication.

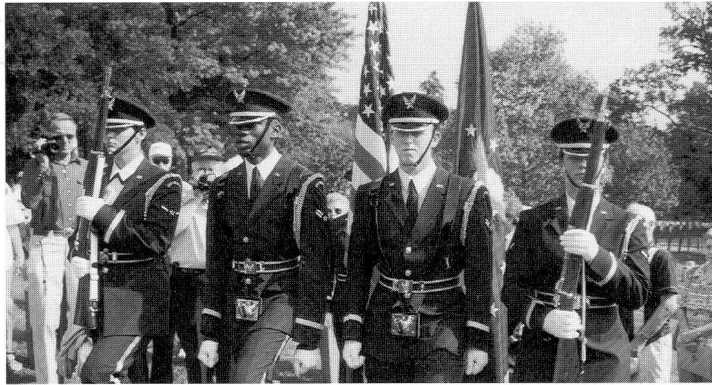
A full dress Air Force Awards Company from Bolling AFB, presented the Distinguished Flying Cross medal to Joseph G Walter, Jr, 826th Sq. with all due military formality. This was an unscheduled but welcome surprise to Joe and those in attendance as well.

Chaplain Schaick then gave the benediction. The Air Force Bugler played taps. The Air Force Honor Guard Color Team then retired the colors. The attendees were invited to take pictures.

For members and families information: The location of the 484th Memorial Plaque and Tree is Site #33, at the Junction of Grant and Roosevelt Drives in Arlington National Cemetery

The Display Room

While the display room has always been a popular place in past reunions, this year topped them all, with the added display of copies of Mission Records from June 14, 1944 to May 1945.



Squadron Dinners

Once again, Fang and Edith Hansen had to stand-down for this reunion, and as 'forfeiture', they hosted each and everyone in their 824th Squadron to a bottle of Cold Duck sparkling wine. Enjoyed by all!

Annual Meeting Report

The annual business meeting took place on Saturday, September 13, 1997, at 9:30 AM. The minutes of the last meeting and financial report were read, given and approved.

Scholarship Report

A report from the Memorial Scholarship Committee chairman Richard Muscatello was presented, including the current financial status of the scholarship fund. The four 1966 scholarship awards of \$600 each to the Italian students were presented at the ceremony in Cerignola on May 12, 1977, with official educational dignitaries in attendance. Letters of acknowledgment and photos from each of the four awardees have been received and enlarged copies were on display at the reunion and included in this issue of the Flyer. In accordance with membership approval for broadening the scholarship award program to venues in the United States, a scholarship award of \$1,000 was presented by Committee member, Vernon Janke, on May 10, 1997, in Harvard, Nebraska, to Stephanie Joy Cude, a Senior at Harvard Public School, in commemoration of the 484th BG Phase Training at Harvard AFB 1943-44. This is the 2nd award to a Harvard Public School student. Another scholarship award of \$1,000 was presented at the 1997 Reunion Banquet, Saturday evening, September 13, 1997, to a Washington D C student from Benjamin Baneker Academic School, Delonte Gholston.

The Scholarship Committee made recommendations, approved by the membership present as follows: Increase the number of awards to six (6), in the amount of \$600 each, to be given to qualifying Italian students in Cerignola for the year 1998; that an award of \$1,000 be given to a Harvard Nebraska High School qualifying graduate student for the year 1998; and that awarding a scholarship to a student at the reunion site be discontinued for the time being.

Election of Officers

In accordance with the Notice of the Annual Meeting for the purpose of electing directors for the year 1997-1998, the election of directors took place. The Directors are: Bud Markel, Beatrice Markel, John Billings, Ken Hubertz, and Ed Schwartz. Appreciation of the past services on the Board of outgoing Directors, Frank Valdez and Charlie McKew were acknowledged by the Chairman.

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