

403 BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON, MEDIUM



MISSION

LINEAGE

13 Reconnaissance Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 20 Nov 1940
Activated, 15 Jan 1941
Redesignated 403 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy), 22 Apr 1942
Inactivated, 29 Apr 1946
Redesignated 403 Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 20 Aug 1958
Activated, 1 Dec 1958
Discontinued, 15 Mar 1960
Organized, 15 May 1960
Discontinued and inactivated, 1 Jan 1961

STATIONS

Langley Field, VA, 15 Jan 1941
Bangor, ME, 30 Aug-18 Jan 1942
Melbourne, Australia, 27 Feb 1942
Laverton, Australia, 14 Mar 1942
Torrens Creek, Australia, 27 Aug 1942
Iron Range, Australia, c. 17 Oct 1942
Milne Bay, New Guinea, 23 Nov 1942
Mareeba, Australia, 21 Jan 1943
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 11 May 1943
Dobodura, New Guinea, 13 Dec 1943
Nadzab, New Guinea, 12 Mar 1944
Owi, Schouten Islands, 28 Jul 1944
Tacloban, Leyte, 19 Nov 1944
Clark Field, Luzon, 15 Mar 1945
Ie Shima, 22 Jul 1945

Ft William McKinley, Luzon, 10 Dec 1945-29 Apr 1946
Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 1 Dec 1958-15 Mar 1960
Carswell AFB, TX, 15 May 1960-1 Jan 1961

ASSIGNMENTS

43 Bombardment Group, 15 Jan 1941-29 Apr 1946
43 Bombardment Wing, 1 Dec 1958
Department of the Air Force, 15 Mar 1960
Strategic Air Command, 12 Apr 1960
43 Bombardment Wing, 15 May 1960-1 Jan 1961

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17
B-18, 1941
A-29
B-17, 1942-1943
B-24, 1942—1945
B-47, 1958-1960
B-58, 1960

COMMANDERS

Maj Russell A. Wilson, 15 Jan 1941
Maj Carl T. Goldenberg, 12 Aug 1941
Maj Thomas N. Charles, 18 Jan 1942- 29 Nov 1942
Maj Franklyn T. Green, 5 Dec 1942
Maj Jay P. Rousek, 1 Mar 1943
Maj William L. Welch, 12 Jun 1943
Maj Charles B. Downer, 1 Oct 1943
Maj Dorwin C. Wilson, 6 Jan 1944
Capt Russell M. Bragg, 1 May 1944
Capt Gustave R. Apai, 1 Sep 1944
Maj Leonard H. Clark, Jan 1945
Capt Willis F. Bond, 23 Jun 1945-Sep 1945

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Japan
China Defensive
Papua
New Guinea
Northern Solomons
Bismarck Archipelago

Western Pacific
Leyte
Luzon
Southern Philippines
China Offensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Papua, [Oct] 1942-23 Jan 1943
Bismarck Sea, 2-4 Mar 1943

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

EMBLEM

On a silver-gray sector of a circle, point down, within an Air Force blue border, an Air Force blue globe, land areas white, below the constellations Cassiopeia in dexter chief and the Big Dipper in sinister chief, Air Force golden yellow; over all two radar crosshairs, Air Force golden yellow. (Approved, 31 Jul 1959)

MOTTO

"Mareeba Butchers": this nickname came from a Tokyo Rose radio broadcast in which she claimed that the airmen flying out of Mareeba were guilty of intentionally killing innocent women and children. She called the men the "Mareeba Butchers" and the 403rd adopted the nickname as their own.

OPERATIONS

Antisubmarine, Dec 1941-Jan 1942; combat in Southwest and Western Pacific, Oct 1942-12 Aug 1945; not fully manned or equipped, 23 Nov 1945-29 Apr 1946.

On the 15th the 403rd Squadron became the first unit in the Southwest Pacific to lay mines. On that mission 18 mines were dropped from an altitude of 300 feet in the mouth of the Sepik River, in order to obstruct enemy shipping moving up the river to Marienburg, New Guinea.

B-24J 41-47483 of the 403rd Bomb Squadron crashed on a small hill near Leichhardt Creek north of Bluewater Creek (north of Townsville) on 28 March 1944. The aircraft became lost during bad weather associated with a cyclone on a flight from Dobodura in New Guinea to Garbutt airfield.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.