

833 BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON, HEAVY



MISSION

LINEAGE

833 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 14 Sep 1943
Activated, 20 Sep 1943
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945

STATIONS

McCook AAFld, NE, 20 Sep 1943
Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 9 Nov 1943-9 Mar 1944
Sudbury, England, 5 Apr 1944-Aug 1945
Drew Field, FL, 3 Sep7- Nov 1945

ASSIGNMENTS

486 Bombardment Group, 20 Sep 1943-7 Nov 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24, 1943-1944
B-17, 1944

COMMANDERS

Cpt Lionel J. Cormier

HONORS

Service Streamers
None

Campaign Streamers

Offensive, Europe

Air Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 8 May 1944-21 Apr 1945, including pathfinder operations, 30 Aug 1944-Apr 1945.

The 833rd was originally referred to as the "Wyverns" squadron. The symbol chosen is fashioned after the Heraldic monster used on Sir Frances Drake's coat of arms. The beast was a fire spitting bird with draconic tail and tongue. A bomb and 50 caliber machine gun were added to complete the link between the historic and modern missions this emblem became associated. The emblem was drawn from a prototype found in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. When the 486th received its first Pathfinders they were assigned to the 833rd BS. At the same time all lead aircraft were assigned to the 833rd, and it became this squadron's responsibility to maintain the lead ships and train their crews. Thus, the 833rd was alternatively known as "the Pathfinders."

Radar was a new invention during WWII and the allies had a distinct technological advantage. The british had developed the cavity magnetron which allowed for the transmission of a relatively powerful radar beam from a compact transmitter. The first radar sets used by the 486th were called GEE-H. These radar transmitters replaced the ball turret on designated aircraft who would then direct the bomb run. The aircraft carrying these radar sets were known as Pathfinders.

GEE-H radar sets, although very helpful, had several short comings. They were limited in range (200 miles from the English ground stations with the lead A/C at 25k ft), frequently failed or easily jammed, and required highly trained operators. When the 486th gave their B24s up to the 2nd air division, they also lost their pathfinders. During the month of August, the 486th relied on other groups for pathfinder bombing cues. Late in August of 44 the pathfinder B17s began to arrive. These

carried the new An/APS-15 radar sets (cover name H2X). The crews, however, called them "Mickey sets."

The Mickey sets were located in the nose of the A/C with the transmitter replacing the ball turret. The radar return was displayed on the operators scope clearly marking ground features to a radius of 50 miles at an operating altitude of 25k feet. Natural landforms; e.g., water, land and forests, as well as man made objects could easily be seen.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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