

2014 Reunion Report

The Second reunion of the 1/83rd Artillery was held in Branson, MO, at the Radisson Hotel, from October 12th thru 14th. The attendees included sixty Veterans of the 1/83rd plus 55 family members and friends.

The attendees represented 32 States. It was the largest group of 1/83rd Veterans ever assembled since Vietnam.

For a list of the all the attendees, see the 83rd website at...

http://home.comcast.net/~83rd_artillery/Reunions/2014_Reunion/Reunion_2014_Attendees_Final.htm

The Reunion agenda was:

Date	Start Time	End Time	Description
Sunday 10/12/14	1:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.	Reunion Registration
	1:00 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	Room Raffle Tickets sold
	7:00 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	PX Open
	3:00 p.m.	11:59 p.m.	Hospitality Suite
	7:00 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	Meet and Greet (with lite refreshments)
	9:00 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	Silent Auction and Raffle Drawing
Monday 10/13/14	8:00 a.m.	11:59 p.m.	Hospitality Suite
	8:30 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	Coffee Break (with Bagels and Danish)
	9:00 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	PX Open
	9:00 a.m.	Noon	Group Discussions
	10:00 a.m.	2:00 p.m.	Wives/Guests Meeting - Hosted by Sue Marchal
	Noon	1:30 p.m.	Lunch Break (on your own)
	1:30 p.m.	2:00 p.m.	Group Discussions
	2:30 p.m.	3:00 p.m.	Beverage Break
	3:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.	Group Discussions
	4:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m.	Free Time
	5:15 p.m.		Meet Bus to Hughes Bros Dinner Show
	6:00 p.m.	11:00 p.m.	Hughes Bros Dinner Show
Tuesday 10/14/14	8:00 a.m.	11:59 p.m.	Hospitality Suite
	8:30 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	Coffee Break (with Bagels and Danish)
	9:00 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	PX Open
	9:00 a.m.	Noon	Group Discussions
	Noon	1:30 p.m.	Lunch Break (on your own)
	1:30 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	Future Reunion Meeting
	3:30 p.m.	5:30 p.m.	Free Time
	5:30 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	Cocktails (Cash Bar)
	6:00 p.m.	6:30 p.m.	Opening Dinner Ceremonies
	6:30 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	Dinner and Group Pictures

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The agenda was very informal, most of the time was for the Veterans to break into groups to discuss topics of interest and reconnect after many years.

On Monday morning, Sue Marchal hosted a wives meeting which covered several subjects including PTSD and VA Benefits. Sue is a retired VA nurse and she kindly offered to host this meeting which was well attended and was a big success.

Registration and the distribution of welcome information packets were available on Sunday between 1–4 p.m. Sunday evening was the official Meet and Greet. Beverages and lite refreshments were available. The evening was relaxing with good conversation and companionship and gave everyone their first chance to get acquainted or in some cases re-acquainted.

We conducted three fund raising activities which were very successful. We had a raffle to chance off two hotel rooms for the 3 nights of the Reunion, a silent auction during the Meet and Greet and a PX which was open throughout the Reunion.

There were coffee breaks with refreshments available at the morning breaks on Monday and Tuesday and a beverage break Monday afternoon.

Tuesday afternoon we met to discuss future reunions. The welcome packet contained a questionnaire that was to be returned by Tuesday morning with individual thoughts and suggestions. We then discussed the results of the questionnaire Tuesday afternoon.

The overwhelming majority voted that we should continue to have our Reunions every other year and at the same time of year and that Washington DC should be the site of our next Reunion in 2016.

Tuesday evening started with cocktails and the singing of the National Anthem by the Hughes Brothers, a very talented group whose dinner show we attended on Monday night. The 5 brothers then mingled with everyone and as they left for their nightly show sang a Christmas Song. Dinner, which followed shortly after, was a buffet with a variety of meal choices and everyone seemed to enjoy it. A cash bar was available for the entire event.

Tables were set for 10 people and the conversations were lively with many stories, big and small, being told. We had many good laughs. Pictures were taken and have been added to the website.

The “*Missing Man Table & Honors Ceremony*” was conducted to honor and remember those of the 1/83rd who never made it home from Vietnam. We read the names of those men. The ceremony also was to remember those of our Battalion who have passed away since Vietnam.

Our guest speaker was Elizabeth Hughes the Public Relations Director at College of the Ozarks. Elizabeth explained the Patriotic Education Program at the College. The program involves students who accompany Veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam to locations where they served. She graciously thanked all of us not only for our Vietnam service but also for our service to our country. Her speech was enjoyed by all.

The Hospitality room was available through Tuesday evening and most attendees were heading home on Wednesday.

I believe that one of the things holding some of you back from attending a reunion is that you think that if your old buddies will not be there, you will not enjoy yourself, etc. I think that this reunion proved that this isn't the case. We all served with the 1/83rd at some time or another and we have that as common ground.

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We had guys from all Batteries and all different years that the 1/83rd was in Vietnam. I spoke to everyone and all told me what a nice time they had. It was amazing to see how easily everyone of our group just fell into conversation.

I hope after reading this you will take some time and seriously consider attending our next reunion. It was a worthwhile and rewarding experience

Thank you.