

Lineage and Honors 83d Chemical Battalion

Constituted: 12 March 1942 in the U.S. Army as the 83d Chemical Battalion

Activated: 10 June 1942 at Camp Gordon, Georgia

Campaigns during World War II: Sicily (with arrowhead), Naples-Foggia (with arrowhead), Anzio (with arrowhead), Rome-Arno, Southern France (with arrowhead), Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe

Reorganized and redesignated: 27 June 1944 as the 83d Chemical Battalion (Motorized)

Reorganized and redesignated: 7 December 1944 as the 83d Chemical Mortar Battalion

Inactivated: 26 November 1945 at Camp Myles Standish, Massachusetts

Redesignated: Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) on 5 June 1951 as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (HHD), 83d Chemical Smoke Generator Battalion, and allotted to the Regular Army (remainder of battalion disbanded)

Activated: 16 July 1951 in Germany

Inactivated: 15 January 1952 in England; concurrently, HHD, 83d Chemical Smoke Generator Battalion redesignated as HHC, 83d Chemical Mortar Battalion

Redesignated: 1 February 1955 as HHD, 83d Chemical Battalion

Activated: 18 March 1955 at Fort McClellan, Alabama

Inactivated: 20 December 1966 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina

Activated: 1 October 1993 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina

Relocated and reorganized: 15 September 2000 at Fort Polk, Louisiana

Campaign during Operation Noble Eagle: Provided biological protection to the Pentagon October–December 2001

Campaign during Operation Enduring Freedom: Provided chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) reconnaissance and force protection October 2001–September 2002 in Qatar, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Kuwait

Campaign during Operation Iraqi Freedom: Served 118 days in support of the 377th Theater Support Command (V Corps) and the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in Kuwait and Iraq

“High angle hell” is what they called it. The 4.2-inch diameter, 48-inch-long tube capable of throwing a volley of 80 rounds per hour up to 565 yards (4,400 yards with the improved high-explosive, point-detonating [HEPD] round), proved invaluable to infantry and ranger units during World War II. The men of the 83d Chemical Mortar Battalion carrying this tool of war emulated the bravery and versatility of Dragon Soldiers.

The 83d Chemical Battalion was activated as the United States entered World War II. After arriving in Oran, Algeria, on 11 May 1943, the battalion quickly prepared for amphibious assaults and other combat operations. The battalion was assigned to Darby’s Ranger Force X, a special task force of U.S. Army Rangers charged with the invasion of Sicily. On 10 July 1943, the invasion task force landed at Gela, Sicily. Although the force was greeted by sustained artillery batteries, mortars, and machine gun fire, Soldiers hand-carried their 333-pound mortar systems through minefields and rough terrain to successfully suppress enemy attacks.

The 83d conducted four other amphibious and air assaults during World War II, to include landings in Naples-Foggia, Anzio, and southern France. The battalion valiantly served in eight campaigns, for a total of 508 days in combat.

Today, the Dragon Soldiers of the 83d Chemical Battalion continue to serve honorably by performing CBRN reconnaissance, biological surveillance and, during wartime operations, smoke and decontamination operations. The battalion deployed three times in support of the War on Terrorism (WOT). In Operation Noble Eagle, shortly after 11 September 2001, the battalion deployed the 7th Chemical Company from its home station of Fort Polk, Louisiana, to Washington, D.C., to provide identification and early warning operations at the Pentagon. Concurrently, the rest of the battalion began a rigorous training cycle for platoon elements deploying to Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 83d Chemical Battalion, rich with history and valiant service, continues to support the WOT today and sets a strong example for all Dragon Soldiers. 🐉

Archive information for Chemical units is maintained at the U.S. Army Chemical School History Office. Veterans are encouraged to send oral interviews, photographs, and documents to help us preserve the rich history of the Corps. For additional information or to submit information, contact the History Office by telephone at (573) 563-7339; by e-mail at <david.chuber@conus.army.mil>; or by mail at 401 MANSCEN Loop, Suite 44, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri 65473-8926.