



72nd Annual Reunion New Orleans, Louisiana August 4 – 8, 2026

72nd Annual Reunion

Submitted by Jackie Hanson, daughter-in-law of Maynard Hanson

The 72nd Annual Reunion will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, August 4 – 8, 2026. Mark your calendars—the reunion is earlier than usual this year. With these earlier dates, we hope more families will be able to attend, as Veterans’ great-grandchildren will not yet be in school. This timing has been discussed on several occasions, and since the opportunity presented itself this year, we are giving it a try.

Our hotel is the Higgins Hotel, Curio by Hilton. Its name reflects the contributions of the



extraordinary entrepreneur, Andrew Higgins, who designed and built over 20,000 boats in New Orleans that were used in every

major amphibious assault of World War II. Conveniently located directly across the street from the National WWII Museum, the hotel offers 230 era-inspired guest rooms, premium amenities including refrigerators and in-room safes, as well as a full-service restaurant, lounge, and a rooftop bar. The hotel rate is \$133 plus taxes and \$1 fee per night for either a king or double-queen room. This is a great rate for this hotel, but just a heads up—parking is \$40 per day plus taxes.

A visit to New Orleans offers a unique blend of history, culture, and music unlike anywhere else in the United States. Known for its vibrant atmosphere, the city is famous for the historic French Quarter, where visitors can stroll past colorful balconies, enjoy live jazz, and sample classic dishes such as gumbo and beignets. Street performers, historic architecture, and the sounds of brass bands create an unforgettable experience. Your choices are limitless. The hotel is located in New Orleans’ Arts and Warehouse District, a charming and historic area filled with restaurants, art galleries, coffee shops, and boutiques housed in converted warehouses.

Registration deadline is Monday, July 6th.

During hospitality hours the room will be open to browse the displays and to visit with other attendees.

Reunion Schedule by Day:

This schedule is subject to change. The most current schedule will be available on the website and at the reunion.

Tuesday – August 4, 2026

Another year, another reunion . . . this year we are back in New Orleans. To start, the Board will meet at 1 PM. The hospitality room will be open from 2–5 PM. After dinner, the hospitality room will reopen at 6:30 PM for registration and informal visiting until 9:30 PM.

Wednesday – August 5, 2026

The top-rated attraction in New Orleans, The National WWII Museum, tells the story of the American experience in the war that changed the world—why it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today—so that future generations will know the price of freedom and be inspired by what they learn.

It was made clear during our Membership

Pre and Post Days

Pre and post days are available at our group rate if available. Currently, Saturday, August first is sold out, but if you really want Saturday night, keep checking. Just as we have a deadline, others do too and if they do not fill all of their rooms that were blocked for their event, they will be released and will become available for others to reserve.



Meeting in San Antonio that more than one day is needed to truly experience all that the museum has to offer. With that in mind, we have opted for the two-day pass, which includes the following:

- Access to all exhibits
- Guided Tour
- *Beyond All Boundaries* film
- Freedom Theater experience (Friday)
- Second-Day Pass (Friday)

Wednesday will be a more structured day. We will begin with a two-hour private museum highlights guided tour, followed by lunch on your own. After lunch, we are scheduled for the *Beyond All Boundaries* film, followed by time on your own to explore until the museum closes at 5 PM.

This evening at the Higgins Hotel in the hospitality room will start with a mixer featuring a mashed potato bar. The mixer will be followed by our annual Membership Meeting.

Thursday – August 6, 2026

We are in for a long day . . . the bus will load at 7:45 AM . . . sharp! Today we will head to Camp Shelby where the Veterans trained before deploying to the European Theater of Operations. It is a two-plus-hour bus ride, so we have to leave early to fit everything into the day.

We will begin with a bus tour of Camp Shelby including significant WWII locations—some directly related to the 65th Infantry Division.

Lunch will be buffet style at the Dining Facility.

After lunch, we will continue the bus tour of Camp Shelby. The day will conclude with a presentation by Honorary Member Mark Prine, who will share information about William Carey University's connection to WWII and the 65th Infantry Division.

You will have time for a nice nap on the bus before enjoying an evening in New Orleans.

Friday – August 7, 2026

After our long day Thursday, we are back at the National WWII Museum—just across the street. Today is mostly on your own, with time to explore at your leisure. We will meet at 9:50 AM at the Freedom Theater for a short film before you head out on your own until the museum closes at 5 PM.

There are two other guided tours that you can book on your own for \$30 plus tax during your 'time on your own' at the museum. They are:

- Home Front Guided Tour
- Europe and Pacific Guided Tour

At 5:30, please return to the museum for an evening buffet, followed by entertainment by the Victory Belles in BB's Stage Door Canteen.

When the Victory Belles vocal trio takes to the stage, the audience is transported back eight decades. With their period outfits, old-style glamour, and harmonies that evoke the era of boogie-woogie and swing, the Victory Belles—heiresses to the Andrews Sisters—reflect a time of national crisis but also unity, patriotism, and wholesomeness.

Since being founded in 2009, the troupe has been a particular favorite of the sadly fast-dwindling band of World War II veterans. At the 2015 New Orleans reunion our Veterans experienced this firsthand when they were entertained by the Victory Belles.

We will finish the evening in the hospitality room at the Higgins Hotel for our formal farewell and one last opportunity to visit before we all head home in many different directions.

Saturday – August 8, 2026

Time for last minute packing—make sure you have all of your items out of the hospitality room before you leave. Those of you that have extra time to spend in New Orleans enjoy your stay, as there is much to see and do.

Dietary Needs:

Dietary restrictions and/or special needs will be accommodated to the best of our ability. Please be sure to make these requests clear on your registration form. Register early so we have time to try and fulfill your needs.

See you in New Orleans!

Schedule at a Glance

Tuesday, August 4:

*Breakfast..... Café Normandie..... 7:00 – 11:00 AM
 Hospitality Setup..... Red Cross/Chartwell ... 9:00 AM – NOON
 Lunch On Your Own 11:30 AM
 Board Meeting Overlord Boardroom 12:45 – 5:00 PM
 Hospitality Red Cross/Chartwell 2:00 – 5:00 PM
 Dinner..... On Your Own 5:00 – 6:30 PM
 Hospitality Red Cross/Chartwell 6:30 – 9:30 PM
 Registration..... Red Cross/Chartwell 6:30 – 9:30 PM

Wednesday, August 5:

*Breakfast..... Café Normandie..... 7:00 – 8:45 AM
 Opening Program..... Red Cross/Chartwell 8:45 AM
 Walk to Museum..... Meet in lobby..... 9:10 AM
 Highlights Guided Tour.... WWII Museum 9:30 – 11:30 AM
 Lunch On Your Own 11:30 AM
 Beyond All Boundaries WWII Museum 1:00 PM
 Time on Your Own ... WWII Museum 2:00 – 5:00 PM
 Mixer..... Red Cross/Chartwell 6:00 PM
 Membership Meeting Red Cross/Chartwell 7:00 PM
 Hospitality Red Cross/Chartwell 5:30 – 9:30 PM

***Breakfast is on your own.**

Reminder:

Final itinerary will be available at the reunion.

Thursday, August 6:

*Breakfast..... Café Normandie 7:00 – 7:45 AM
 Load Bus..... Hotel Lobby 7:45 AM
 Camp Shelby Tour..... Camp Shelby..... 10:30 AM
 Lunch..... Camp Cafeteria NOON – 1:00 PM
 Camp Shelby Tour..... Camp Shelby..... 1:00 – 3:00 PM
 Mark Prine Theater..... 3:00 – 3:45 PM
 Load Bus..... Theater..... 3:45 PM
 Hospitality..... Red Cross/Chartwell..... 8:00 – 9:30 PM

Friday, August 7:

*Breakfast..... Café Normandie 7:00 – 9:00 AM
 Freedom Theater Film ... WWII Museum 9:50 AM
 Time on Your Own... WWII Museum 10:00 – NOON
 Lunch..... On Your Own..... NOON – 1:00 PM
 Time on Your Own... WWII Museum 2:00 – 5:00 PM
 Hospitality..... Red Cross/Chartwell..... 4:00 – 5:00 PM
 Banquet..... Meet in Lobby..... 5:10 PM
 Banquet at BB's Stage Door Canteen 5:30 – 7:30 PM
 Walk to WWII Museum..... 5:10 PM
 Dinner 5:30 PM
 Victory Belles..... 6:30 PM
 Hospitality..... Red Cross/Chartwell..... 7:30 – 11:00 PM

Saturday, August 8:

*Breakfast..... Café Normandie... 7:00 – 11:00 AM



**Thursday we returned to where it all began . . .
 Camp Shelby, Mississippi**

MSY to the Higgins Hotel

The Higgins Hotel does not have a shuttle to and from the New Orleans (MSY) airport. For a quick and hassle-free journey from the New Orleans airport to the Higgins Hotel, taking a taxi (~\$40) or rideshare like Uber or Lyft service is recommended, especially if you are traveling with luggage. If you are looking to save money and don't mind a longer travel time, a shuttle or the public bus is a viable option. Make sure to check the latest schedules and fares before your trip to ensure a smooth journey to the Higgins Hotel.