



THE SENTRY

Issue #19, September 2021



(Photo by R.J. Capak, Getty Images)

20th Anniversary of the 9/11 Attacks

-Posted on [History.com](https://www.history.com)

On September 11, 2001, 19 militants associated with the Islamic extremist group al Qaeda hijacked four airplanes and carried out suicide attacks against targets in the United States. Two of the planes were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, a third plane hit the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C., and the fourth plane crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 people were killed during the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which triggered major U.S. initiatives to combat terrorism and defined the presidency of George W. Bush.

World Trade Center

On September 11, 2001, at 8:45 a.m. on a clear Tuesday morning, an American Airlines Boeing 767 loaded with 20,000 gallons of jet fuel crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. The impact left a gaping, burning hole near the 80th floor of the 110-story skyscraper, instantly killing hundreds of people and trapping hundreds more in higher floors.

As the evacuation of the tower and its twin got

underway, television cameras broadcasted live images of what initially appeared to be a freak accident. Then, 18 minutes after the first plane hit, a second Boeing 767—United Airlines Flight 175—appeared out of the sky, turned sharply toward the World Trade Center and sliced into the south tower near the 60th floor. The collision caused a massive explosion that showered burning debris over surrounding buildings and onto the streets below. It immediately became clear that America was under attack.

Osama bin Laden

The hijackers were Islamic terrorists from Saudi Arabia and several other Arab nations. Reportedly financed by the al Qaeda terrorist organization of Saudi fugitive Osama bin Laden, they were allegedly acting in retaliation for America's support of Israel, its involvement in the Persian Gulf War and its continued military presence in the Middle East.

Some of the terrorists had lived in the United States for more than a year and had taken flying lessons at American commercial flight schools. Others had slipped into the country in the months before September 11 and acted as the "muscle" in the operation. The 19 terrorists easily smuggled box-cutters and knives through security at three East Coast airports and boarded four early

morning flights bound for California, chosen because the planes were loaded with fuel for the long transcontinental journey. Soon after takeoff, the terrorists commandeered the four planes and took the controls, transforming ordinary passenger jets into guided missiles.

Pentagon Attack

As millions watched the events unfolding in New York, American Airlines Flight 77 circled over downtown Washington, D.C., before crashing into the west side of the Pentagon military headquarters at 9:45 a.m. Jet fuel from the Boeing 757 caused a devastating inferno that led to the structural collapse of a portion of the giant concrete building, which is the headquarters of the U.S. Department of Defense. All told, 125 military personnel and civilians were killed in the Pentagon, along with all 64 people aboard the airliner.

Twin Towers Collapse

Less than 15 minutes after the terrorists struck the nerve center of the U.S. military, the horror in New York took a catastrophic turn when the south tower of the World Trade Center collapsed in a massive cloud of dust and smoke. The structural steel of the skyscraper, built to withstand winds in excess of 200 miles per hour and a large conventional fire, could not withstand the tremendous heat generated by...

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Fall BBQ Chicken Dinner Scheduled!

The fall barbecue chicken dinner will be held on Saturday, November 6th in honor of Veterans Day. Dinners will be served on a takeout basis only and can be picked up between noon and 2pm. Tickets will be available at the August membership meeting for distribution and for \$10/meal.

The meal will include all the usuals, such as slaw, potato salad, roll, and the best doggone barbecue chicken this side of heaven. All members are encouraged to sell advance tickets.

If you would like to obtain tickets and cannot attend an in-person meeting, please email AL416NC@gmail.com or contact Finance Officer Jim Snyder directly to work out alternate arrangements.



New Signage at Post

As voted upon and approved during the August membership meeting, we have a new American Legion logo on the front of our post. A big thank you goes to 2nd Vice-Commander Johnny Clinton, who led the charge for this initiative! This is the first sign improvement since the post was opened at South Alston Avenue in 1988.



Tuesday, September 14th – Monthly Activities (Dinner at 6:00pm, business meeting at 6:45pm)
Tuesday, October 12th – Monthly Activities (No dinner, business meeting at 7:00pm)
Tuesday, October 26th – BBQ Chicken dinner planning meeting 7:00pm. All ticket sales to be turned in.
Saturday, November 6th – Fall BBQ Chicken Dinner, pickup between noon-2pm

Post Sees More Exterior Updates

If you haven't seen the post recently, you have missed several improvements. Johnny Clinton has planted some new rose bushes, as well as freshened up the plantings at the front door. Also, our parking lot has been re-sealed and striped! Check out these pics:



Car/Bike/Military Vehicle Show at Post 6

American Legion Post 6 in Chapel Hill will be hosting their 1st annual "We Remember" car/bike/military vehicle show at 3700 NC 54 West, Chapel Hill, NC 27516. The public is welcome to attend for free starting at 10am, judging is at 12pm, with the awards for different classes presented at 2pm. Food and beverages will be available for sale.



Calendar Reminders

September 6: Labor Day
September 11: Patriot Day
September 16: American Legion Day
September 17: POW/MIA Recognition Day
September 17: U.S. Constitution Day
September 18: U.S. Air Force Birthday
September 26: Gold Star Mothers Day

The Sentry is a free, monthly newsletter of the American Legion Post 416, Lowe's Grove NC.

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Annual Membership Renewal Time



For Legionnaires who renew their membership yearly, now is the time for Post 416's annual membership drive. Dues are only \$30, making renewal more affordable than ever! You can renew via three different and convenient methods:

- Pay in person at the monthly membership meeting,
- Mail a check to the post's post office box address, or
- Renew online at Legion.org

Our membership renewal goals for this year are: (1) 50% post renewal by Sep 1, 2021, (2) 90% post renewal by Jan 1, 2022, and (3) 103% membership by March 1, 2022. Help us achieve our goals by completing your membership renewal today: be a part of the legacy – share the vision at Post 416!

9/11 Remembered (continued from page 1)

...the burning jet fuel.

At 10:30 a.m., the north building of the twin towers collapsed. Only six people in the World Trade Center towers at the time of their collapse survived. Almost 10,000 others were treated for injuries, many severe.

Flight 93

Meanwhile, a fourth California-bound plane—United Flight 93—was hijacked about 40 minutes after leaving Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey. Because the plane had been delayed in taking off, passengers on board learned of events in New York and Washington via cell phone and Airfone calls to the ground. Knowing that the aircraft was not returning to an airport as the hijackers claimed, a group of passengers and flight attendants planned an insurrection.

One of the passengers, Thomas Burnett, Jr., told his wife over the phone that "I know we're all going to die. There's three of us who are going to do something about it. I love you, honey." Another passenger—Todd Beamer—was heard saying "Are you guys ready? Let's roll" over an open line. Sandy Bradshaw, a flight attendant, called her husband and explained that she had slipped into a galley and was filling pitchers with boiling water. Her last words to him were "Everyone's running to first class. I've got to go. Bye." The passengers fought the four hijackers and are suspected to have attacked the cockpit with a fire extinguisher. The plane then flipped over and sped toward the ground at upwards of 500 miles per hour, crashing in a rural field near Shanksville in western Pennsylvania at 10:10 a.m.

All 44 people aboard were killed. Its intended target is not known, but theories include the White House, the U.S. Capitol, the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland or one of several nuclear power plants along the eastern seaboard.

How Many People Died in the 9/11 Attacks?

A total of 2,996 people were killed in the 9/11 attacks, including the 19 terrorist hijackers aboard the four airplanes. Citizens of 78 countries died in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. At the World Trade Center, 2,763 died after the two planes slammed into the twin towers. That figure includes 343 firefighters and paramedics, 23 New York City police officers and 37 Port Authority police officers who were struggling to complete an evacuation of the buildings and save the office workers trapped on higher floors. At the Pentagon, 189 people were killed, including 64 on American Airlines Flight 77, the airliner that struck the building. On Flight 93, 44 people died when the plane crash-landed in Pennsylvania.

America Responds

At 7 p.m., President George W. Bush, who was in Florida at the time of the attacks and had spent the day being shuttled around the country because of security concerns, returned to the White House. At 9 p.m., he delivered a televised address from the Oval Office, declaring, "Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve." In a reference to the eventual U.S. military response he declared, "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."

Operation Enduring Freedom, the American-led international effort to oust the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and destroy Osama bin Laden's terrorist network based there, began on October 7. Within two months, U.S. forces had effectively removed the Taliban from operational power, but the war continued, as U.S. and coalition forces attempted to defeat a Taliban insurgency campaign based in neighboring Pakistan.

Osama bin Laden, the mastermind behind the September 11th attacks, remained at large until May 2, 2011, when he was finally tracked down and killed by U.S. forces at a hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan. In June 2011, then-President Barack Obama announced the beginning of large-scale troop withdrawals from Afghanistan; it took until August 2021 for all U.S. forces to withdraw.

Department of Homeland Security is Created

In the wake of security fears raised by 9/11 and the mailing of letters containing anthrax that killed two and infected 17, The Homeland Security Act of 2002 created the Department of Homeland Security. It was signed into law by President George W. Bush on November 25, 2002. Today, the Department of Homeland Security is a cabinet responsible for preventing terror attacks, border security, immigrations and customs and disaster relief and prevention.

The act was followed two days later by the formation of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. The bipartisan "9/11 Commission," as it came to be known, was charged with investigating the events that led up to September 11th. The 9/11 Commission Report was released on July 22, 2004. It named Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the accused mastermind behind 9/11, "the principal architect of the 9/11 attacks."

Mohammed led propaganda operations for al Qaeda from 1999-2001. He was captured on March 1, 2003 by the Central Intelligence Agency and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and interrogated before being imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay detention camp with four other accused terrorists charged with 9/11-related war crimes. The use of torture, including waterboarding, during Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's interrogation has received international attention. In August 2019, a U.S. military court judge in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba set a trial date for Mohammed and the other four men charged with plotting the 9/11 terrorist attacks to begin in 2021; it was later postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

9/11 Anniversary and Memorial

On December 18, 2001, Congress approved naming September 11 "Patriot Day" to commemorate the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. In 2009, Congress named September 11 a National Day of Service and Remembrance. The first memorials to September 11 came in the immediate wake of the attacks, with candlelight vigils and flower tributes at U.S. embassies around the world. In Great Britain, Queen Elizabeth sang the American national anthem during the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace. Rio de Janeiro put up billboards showing the city's Christ the Redeemer statue embracing the New York City skyline.

For the first anniversary of the attacks in New York City in 2002, two bright columns of light were shot up into the sky from where the Twin Towers once stood. The "Tribute in Light" then became an annual installation run by the Municipal Art Society of New York. On clear nights, the beams are visible from over 60 miles away. A World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition was held to select an appropriate permanent memorial to the victims of 9/11. The winning design by Michael Arad, "Reflecting Absence," now sits outside the museum in an eight-acre park. It consists of two reflecting pools with waterfalls rushing down where the Twin Towers once rose into the sky.

The names of all 2,983 victims are engraved on the 152 bronze panels surrounding the pools, arranged by where individuals were on the day of the attacks, so coworkers and people on the same flight are memorialized together. The site was opened to the public on September 11, 2011, to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of 9/11. The National September 11 Memorial & Museum followed, opening on the original World Trade Center site in May 2014. The Freedom Tower, also on the original World Trade Center site, opened in November 2014.