

Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor
Foundation



Personal info

Full name

FREEBORN, Duane Edward

Date of birth

24 October 1921

Age

22

Place of birth

Binghamton, Broome County, New York

Hometown

Binghamton, Broome County, New York

Military service

Service number

O-668922

Rank

First Lieutenant

Unit

**579th Bombardment Squadron,
392nd Bombardment Group, Heavy**

Awards

**Purple Heart,
Air Medal**

Death & Grave

Status

Killed in Action

Date of death

13 November 1943

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Ardennes

Plot	Row	Grave
C	22	5

Immediate family

Members

Merton D. Freeborn (father)

Gertrude M. (McCabe) Freeborn (mother)

Donald H. Kane (half-brother)

Plane data

Serial number

42-7561

Data

Type: B-24H

Nickname: Mack's Sack II

Destination: Bremen, Germany

Mission: Bombing of the port

MACR: 1554

More information

1st Lt Duane Freeborn graduated from St. Patrick's High School.

He volunteered for the Air Corps of the Army of the United States in Binghamton, New York on 12 March 1942.

An eye-witness account, given by a pilot of another airplane in the formation, Lt Fogarty, stated that this airplane went down at 1125 hours in a spin and on fire having been attacked by an FW-109 enemy fighter, northeast of the target. There were no other related details of the loss in the MACR.

Duane Freeborn was initially interred at the Lawe cemetery in Oldenburg.

Five crew members survived and were taken prisoner, five were killed.

After the war, M/Sgt Elroy Prud'homme, one of the surviving crew members, stated that they were attacked by FW 190's and their electrical system was so affected that the nose turret was put out of action. The arrangement of the turret was such that the bombardier, Lt Freeborn, was not able to extricate himself until the turret was manually cranked to a full centered position. This was accomplished with Lt Freeborn working within the turret and he operating the emergency crank located at the base of the turret. When Lt Freeborn was out of the turret he attempted to open the nose wheel doors, which provided the escape hatch for the navigator and the bombardier. On applying pressure on the two handles operating the emergency release mechanism, both of them broke off, rendering useless this means of escape.

Just before the first attack he had opened the bomb-bay doors and he and Lt Freeborn realized this was the only alternative for escaping. He, himself bailed out that way. Just before, he talked with Lt Freeborn and he was quite certain he was still uninjured and apparently had full use of all his mental and psysical capacities. That was the last time he saw Lt Freeborn.

The only reason he could offer for Lt Freeborn's disappearance was the fact they were too low when they were ready to leave the plane. His conclusions are that either Lt Freeborn's parachute failed to operate or he jumped too late to have it function properly.

Photos



Source of information: Peter Schouteten, Raf Dyckmans, Terry Hirsch, www.B24.net, www.wwiimemorial.com, www.archives.gov, www.newspapers.com - Press and Sun-Bulletin, WWII Draft Card

Photo source: www.findagrave.com, Laura Phillips, www.B24.net, Arie-Jan van Hees - Pilot 42-K Victory Fd Texas