

## Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor  
Foundation



### Personal info

Full name

**HEATON, William Mcneal**

Date of birth

**15 April 1920**

Age

**24**

Place of birth

**Pelzer, Anderson County, South  
Carolina**

Hometown

**Hendersonville, Henderson County, North Carolina**

### Military service

Service number

**O-814686**

Rank

**First Lieutenant**

Unit

**61st Fighter Squadron,  
56th Fighter Group**

Awards

**Distinguished Flying Cross,  
Purple Heart,  
Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters**

### Death & Grave

Status

**Killed in Action**

Date of death

**5 September 1944**

Cemetery

**American War Cemetery Margraten**

Plot	Row	Grave
B	4	23

## Immediate family

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### Members

**William E. Heaton (father)**

**Hattie (Neal) Heaton (mother)**

**Dollie Heaton (sister)**

**Emma Heaton (sister)**

**George Heaton (brother)**

**Haskel Heaton (brother)**

**Diana (Gibbs) Heaton (wife)**

## Plane data

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### Serial number

**42-26468**

### Data

**Type: P47D**

**Destination: Merzhausen/Kuneburg, Germany**

**Mission: Rodeo**

**MACR: 9805**

## More information

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William Heaton worked for the Ecusta Paper Corp. in Pisgah Forest.

He was credited by Col Francis S. Gobreshie, top American ace in the European theatre, with saving his life in an encounter with German ME 109s.

1st Lt Gordon J. Blake states in the Missing Aircrew Report:

"I was flying Whippet Red Three in Lt Heaton's flight. We were in the area northeast of Coblenz when an airdrome was sighted. White Flight made a pass to strafe, but discovered they were dummy airplanes. Shortly after this Lt Heaton sighted a train south of this airdrome, and about fifteen miles away. The flight dropped down to strafe and received heavy and accurate light flak. I called Red One and told him about the flak, as he missed the train on his first pass and was pulling up to make a second. Red One severely damaged the locomotive on his second pass and turned right, coming over the edge of the airdrome. We had pulled up and was climbing with about a thousand to fifteen hundred feet of altitude, with the flak very heavy. I looked at Red One and observed a large flash that appeared to be directly in the canopy. The plane continued to fly normally for 15 or 20 seconds and then rolled over, dived into the ground, and exploded. No contact with Lt Heaton was made after he was hit, and no chutes was seen."

## Photos



Source of information: Michel Beckers, Terry Hirsch, [www.wwiimemorial.com](http://www.wwiimemorial.com), [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com), [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) - 1920 census / Headstone and Interment Record, <http://hendersonheritage.com/world-war-ii-heroes/>, [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) - William Wayne Metcalf, [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) - The Greenville News

Photo source: Peter Schouteten, Michel Beckers, Nigel Julian, [www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com), Asheville Citizen Times 18 March 1945