

Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor
Foundation



Personal info

Full name

JOHNSTON, William J

Date of birth

3 April 1920

Age

23

Place of birth

Ohio

Hometown

Youngstown, Mahoning County, Ohio

Military service

Service number

O-678417

Rank

First Lieutenant

Unit

**535th Bombardment Squadron,
381st Bombardment Group, Heavy**

Awards

**Purple Heart,
Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster**

Death & Grave

Status

Killed in Action

Date of death

5 November 1943

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Margraten

Plot	Row	Grave
I	9	16

Immediate family

Members

Frank M. Johnston (father)

Cecelia A. (Gilroanan) Johnston (mother)

F. Donald Johnston (brother)

Edward J. Johnston (brother)

Charles J. Johnston (brother)

L. Robert Johnston (brother)

Paul J. Johnston (brother)

Hugh H. Johnston (brother)

Plane data

Serial number

42-30852

Data

Type: B-17F

Nickname: Hot Toddy aka Blowin' Bessie

Destination: Gelsenkirchen, Germany

Mission: Bombing of the synthetic oil refinery

MACR: 1399

More information

William Johnston attended high school for four years and was a laboratory technician.

He joined the Air Corps of the Army of the United States in Cleveland, Ohio.

The airplane was hit by flak over the target, knocking out #2 engine. Oil vapor came out the #2 nacelle and the propeller was windmilling. also #1 engine was hit and was feathered. It kept up with the formation for about ten minutes and then dropped out and was observed to be losing altitude. Later the plane was attacked by German fighters, hitting it near the cockpit.

Some of the crew members jumped out before the plane hit the water of the Hollandsch Diep near the village named Klundert.

Lt Johnston, who was hit in the face and neck, landed with his parachute in the water and drowned. His body was found later that day. He was initially buried at the Roman Catholic Cemetery in Oosterhout.

In total seven crew members were killed from which six were never recovered. Three crew members survived and were taken prisoner.

The wreck of the plane was recovered in October 1969.

Photos



Source of information: Peter Schouteten, Raf Dyckmans, www.wwiimemorial.com, www.fold3.com - MACR

Photo source: Peter Schouteten, Harry M.T. Kennis, Arie-Jan van Hees - Bomb 43-06 Midland Texas / Pilot 43-C Bruce Fd Texas