

Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor
Foundation



Personal info

Full name

BAIRD, George Walter Jr

Date of birth

19 January 1918

Age

26

Place of birth

Wisconsin

Hometown

Wausau, Marathon County, Wisconsin

Military service

Service number

O-823240

Rank

First Lieutenant

Unit

**49th Fighter Squadron,
14th Fighter Group**

Awards

**Purple Heart,
Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters**

Death & Grave

Status

Finding of Death

Date of death

26 November 1944

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Ardennes

| Plot | Row | Grave |
|------|-----|-------|
| D | 3 | 16 |

Immediate family

Members

George W. Baird (father)

Ella M. (Webert) Baird (mother)

Marion E. Baird (sister)

James D. Baird (brother)

Sharon Baird (sister)

Elaine M. (Radant) Baird (wife)

George L. Baird (son)

Plane data

Serial number

44-24078

Data

Type: P-38L 1-LO

Nickname: Lady Lorraine II

Destination: Seregelyes airfield, Hungary

Mission: Strafing raid

MACR: 10082

More information

1st Lt George W. Baird Jr. was a paymaster for the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company.

He joined the Air Corps of the U.S. Army Reserve in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, on 21 October 1942. Lt Baird received his commission on 8 February 1943 and his pilot's wing at Moody Field in Valdosta, Georgia. He arrived overseas, somewhere in Italy, on 1 June 1944, and had been promoted from second to first lieutenant while overseas.

1st Lt Baird had completed many combat missions as a P-38 Lightning fighter pilot with the 15th Army Air Force in Italy. His missions have included flights over France, Germany, Italy, Romania, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, including an attack on Smederevo, Yugoslavia, on 3 September, when he destroyed two German planes on an airfield. He also flew with a group of escort fighters for B-17 Flying Fortress bombers during the mass rescue of American airmen released from Romanian prison camps in August. 1st Lt Baird had completed at least 50 combat missions when he was reported missing.

Statement of 1st Lt Robert Hauser:

"At about 1455, as we pulled off a parked train, I noticed that the right engine of Lt Baird's ship was smoking, giving off a brownish black smoke. We just about completed a 360° turn to the right when Lt Baird called and said that he was going to feather up and requested an escort. I called my flight leader and told him that I would escort him. I had a great deal more speed than Lt Baird, and hence, in order to stay behind him and keep him in sight, I had to S very sharply. I had made several turns over him, and while I was in a turn to the right, he was in my sight and appeared to be all right as he had feathered up the right engine. As I reversed my turn to the left, I looked down just in time to see Lt Baird's ship hit the ground going straight in. The plane burst into flames, and in my opinion, Lt Baird had no chance to get out. We were undergoing small arms fire at the time."

Photos



Source of information: Raf Dyckmans, Peter Schouteten, Astrid van Erp, www.wwiimemorial.com, www.archives.gov, www.ancestry.com - Family Trees, www.fold3.com - MACR, www.newspapers.com - Green Bay Press-Gazette

Photo source: Peter Schouteten, Brian G. Baird