

Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor
Foundation



Personal info

Full name

LOEHRL, Frederick Arthur

Date of birth

25 August 1917

Age

24

Place of birth

**Milwaukee, Milwaukee County,
Wisconsin**

Hometown

Seattle, King County, Washington

Military service

Service number

O-432079

Rank

Second Lieutenant

Unit

**15th Bombardment Squadron,
27th Bombardment Group, Light**

Awards

**Purple Heart,
Air Medal**

Death & Grave

Status

Missing in Action

Date of death

4 July 1942

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Margraten

Walls of the Missing

Immediate family

Members

Frederick O. Loehrl (father)

Marcelitta P. (Gass) Loehrl (mother)

More information

Lt Frederick A. Loehl attended the University of Washington from 1934-1940 majoring in German before enlisting in the Air Corps in March 1941. He was the first fatal casualties announced in action in the European theater in the first American bombing raid against German-occupied Europe,

The 15th Squadron, operating in conjunction with the British 226th Squadron, attacked four airdrome in occupied territory at approximately 8:00 AM. Six A-20 American aircraft were flown by American crews operating in conjunction with six aircraft of similar type flown by British crews to attack the following four airdromes: De Kooy (located immediately southeast of the Dutch navy harbor city Den Helder, NW Netherlands), Haamstede (located in the Dutch southwestern province Zeeland), Valkenburg (north of the city of Den Haag, The Hague, western Netherlands) and Bergen (immediately northwest of the city of Alkmaar, NW Netherlands).

All planes were loaded with two 500-lb, 11 second delayed action fuse and 16 30-lb incendiaries.

Lt. Loehrl flew full force into the zeroed flak barrage put up by the units around the field. He dropped his incendiary payload along two rows of camouflaged hangars housing Bf-110's and at least one larger mine-laying Heinkel 111 bomber. Hit by punishing flak, Lt. Loehrl's Boston caught fire then crashed just past the Balgzand canal into the shallow seawater.

Statement from Ira C. Eaker, Brig Gen: "'I was present at the briefing and talked to the British base and squadron Commander and the returned crews. The two northern airdromes - De Kooy and Haanstede - were exceptionally heavily defended by light flak. The crews believed that this resulted from the fact that approaching aircraft passed over small boats enroute to the target and personnel aboard these boats flashed a warning to the anti-aircraft defenses. The attackers on the two southern airdromes found no evidence that they were anticipated. Neither of our losses was the result of fighter action as far as can be determined. However, the British aircraft which was lost was undoubtedly damaged by light flak, slowed down, and later destroyed by a fighter."

Lt Loehrl is remembered at the Walls of the Missing at Margraten, Gunner Sgt Robert L. Whitham and Sgt James Wright were killed. Only the navigator, Lt M.D. Draper survived and was taken prisoner. He was the first POW of the 8th Air Force in the ETO.

Photos



Source of information: Raf Dyckmans, Terry Hirsch, www.wwiimemorial.com, www.usaafdata.com, <http://forum.12oclockhigh.net>, www.fold3.com WWII European Theater Army Records, www.ancestry.com Dunkirk Evening Observer 3 September 1942, WWII Draft Card

Photo source: Astrid van Erp, www.newspapers.com - Corvallis Gazette-Times