

John Louis Benz

Birth: Oct. 27, 1927
New Rochelle
Westchester County
New York, USA

Death: Oct. 4, 1955
Dover
Kent County
Delaware, USA

AIR FORCE LT. BENZ KILLED AS JET CRASHES, EXPLODES

First Lt. John L. Benz, twenty-seven of 28 Glenorchy Road, New Rochelle, N.Y. was killed yesterday when his U.S. Air Force F84 Thunderstreak fighter plane crashed and exploded at Dover Air Force Base. He was attempting an emergency landing. Lt. Benz was on a local training flight, a base spokesman said. He radioed the control tower that he had a "possible fire" in his jet aircraft. As Lt. Benz touched down on the runway the aircraft bounced and exploded. An Air Force spokesman said a board of inquiry would look into the cause of the crash.

WAS HERE SUNDAY

The twice decorated twenty-seven-year-old veteran pilot had visited here Sunday to attend the 60th wedding anniversary of his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John G. Benz of 861 Webster Avenue, and visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John George Benz Jr. of Glenorchy Road address. His captain's commission was due to come through shortly before his twenty-eighth birthday, Oct. 27. His parents, notified yesterday, left this morning for Delaware.

VETERAN OF KOREA

A veteran of 17 months' service with the Marine Corps during World War II, he was called into Air Force service from the Reserve in February, 1951. After completing jet pilot training at Las Vegas, Nev., he left for Korean duty in August, 1952. Flying as many as four missions a day when fighting was heavy, he worked as close support for infantry troops flying low over enemy lines or disrupting enemy supply and rail centers and troop concentrations. Night intruder missions, harassing tours over North Korea after dark were also among his assignments. Although his plane jet Shooting Star fighter-bomber was hit three times, he was never wounded and always managed to reach base safely.

WON AIR AWARDS



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He had won the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Returning to this country in April 1953, after nine months combat duty, he was sent to the Dover base. He lived there with his wife and two daughters. Born here in 1927, he graduated from New Rochelle High School and New York State Maritime College, Fort Schuyler, Bronx. Turned down by the Army Air Corps as "too tall" when he tried to enlist during World War II, he joined the Marines. After 17 months service he entered the Maritime College, and after graduation, entered the Air Force. His father, a resident here 52 years, is a building contractor. His mother is the former Laura Jablesnik. In addition to his parents and paternal grandparents, Lt. Benz is survived by his wife, the former Jacqueline Phelan, whom he married Sept. 12, 1951; his two daughters, Barbara Ann and Patricia Laura, and his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Frances Jablesnik of Bergenfield, N.J. (bio by: [Richard Benz](#))

Note: Interment date 10-10-1955. 1LT US Air Force. Veteran Service Dates from 10-27-1948 to 10-01-1955. Information extracted from the National Cemetery Administration's National Gravesite Locator. <http://www.cem.va.gov/>

Burial:

[Arlington National Cemetery](#)

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Virginia, USA

Plot: Section 1 Site 45-3

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Record added: May 18, 2004

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