

B-29 crash in Albuquerque's south valley

DATE July 14, 1945

AIRCRAFT B-29, AAF No. 44-86329

GENERAL LOCATION South Valley, Albuquerque, NM

PEOPLE ABOARD Fourteen crew members on training mission

REFERENCES Official AAF Accident Report for above aircraft and newspaper article

HISTORY

The aircraft took off on Runway 21 from Kirtland Field and about seven miles south of the field crashed and burned parallel to the nearby Santa Fe Railroad track running through the valley. The crash was observed by several witnesses, including some German POWs assigned to perform agricultural work nearby. Several of those men ran to the scene and pulled many of the crew members out of the burning wreckage. Of the 14 people aboard, only an instructor pilot survived the accident.

Before the crash, the plane was observed from Kirtland Field with right main landing gear down. Subsequent investigation revealed the nose gear was also down and the left main gear was $\frac{3}{4}$ down. The flaps were up and the gear switch was in the up position. There was also a dust devil the plane passed through, but the accident investigating board did not feel the weather and landing gear in the down position could be the only accident cause. Possible engine malfunction was considered a possible contributing factor, but the engines had not been examined when the official report was released.

In 2007 and 2008, crash explorers searched the general crash area on foot, most of which had been modified by building construction and commercial use. After one explorer found contemporary aerial photographs of the area, it was possible to pin-point the crash site. After obtaining the landowner's permission, he searched and found aircraft artifacts that confirmed the crash location.



Photo of a similar Boeing B-29 used in WWII for training at Kirtland AFB