On the evening of June 3, 1953, Boeing B-29 #44-84143 took off from Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, on a routine training mission. The aircraft was with the 9th Bomb Wing, 1st Bomb Squadron. On board was the crew of 11 men, plus 3 trainees. Shortly after takeoff, the aircraft suffered runaway propellers on engines #2 and #4. The pilot attempted to maintain altitude and circle back to the runway for an emergency landing, but at 5:39 p.m. the bomber struck high voltage power lines and crashed 5 miles from the base. Aircraft commander Captain George R. Roche was killed, and the other 13 men escaped with injuries. A review board found that improper maintenance was the cause of propeller failure. Site visited on 5/2/18. Special thanks to Craig Fuller for help with finding this crash site.

Crew:

Aircraft commander
Capt. George R. Roche

Co-Pilot
1Lt. Thomas R. Fiorillo

Pilot Trainee
Capt. Charles R. Sheldon

Navigator
1Lt. George R. Brown

Bombardier
1Lt. Arnold J. Kietzer

Radar Operator
Capt. James M. McLellan

Flight Engineer
M/Sgt. Francis X. Hiltz

Radio Operator
T/Sgt. Elton R. Grathwohl

Central Fire Control
A/1C James H. Burnworth

Left Gunner
A/1C Patricio Escamilla

Right Gunner
A/1C Donald C. Van Doren

Tail Gunner
A/1C David M. Smiddie

Gunner Trainee
A/1C James H. Mulgannon

Engineer Trainee
A/1C Sherwin Zook
A view of the crash taken on June 3, 1953. (Courtesy of Rolando Escamilla)
The crew of the B-29 taken in Korea in 1952. The accident at Mountain Home AFB occurred shortly after they returned from combat duty in Korea. Back row, left to right: Smiddie, Hiltz, Escamilla, Van Doren Culp, Burnworth. Front row, left to right: McLellan, Fiorillo, Roche, Brown, Kietzer. (Courtesy of Rolando Escamilla)

A/1C Patricio Escamilla, left gunner on #44-84143. He currently lives in Texas at age 84. (Courtesy of Rolando Escamilla, his son)
Capt. George R. Roche, aircraft commander. (Courtesy of Rolando Escamilla)