

# **Baird Manchester Smith**

## **Obituary**

**Born: Friday, September 7, 1923**

**Died: Tuesday, May 8, 2012**

WWII Veteran serving in the United States Army Air Force from October 15, 1942 to November 16, 1945 as a Tech Sergeant (81st Bombardment Squadron, 12th Bombardment Group (M), Italian Campaign and China, Burma, India Theatre).

In 1946 Baird enrolled at the University of Minnesota; Airline Operations Engineering with GI Bill paying for courses. Classes were across from West High School where he graduated in 1942. In 1947 he was employed at Mid-Continent Airlines in Minneapolis as a cargo handler, he was promoted to Station Agent where he met his future wife Opal Marjorie Johnson (she was working as a reservation agent). This was the time when Baird received his private pilot's license.

On November 30, 1947 Baird and Marge were married at the Old Messiah Lutheran Church which was located on Colfax and Detroit in Denver, they returned to Minneapolis to Mid-Continent. Because of the weather in Minnesota, they decided to relocate. They arrived in Denver which was 70 degrees. They returned to Minnesota, quit their jobs and searched for other opportunities.

They purchased a used 1940 Dodge sedan which took them to Phoenix. On their way to Phoenix, they stopped in Albuquerque and discovered that Phoenix was undergoing a water shortage and decided that Phoenix was not a good place to settle. While in Albuquerque Baird applied for a job at the Albuquerque airport, he was told there was a job available but they didn't have the authority to hire. They returned to Denver and Baird applied at Frontier to get hired in Albuquerque, Frontier advised Baird that there was a job available in Laramie, Wyoming in which he accepted. *<Error - Frontier did not exist then - must have been Challenger as next paragraph says.>*

In July of 1948, Marge learned that she was pregnant with Sandy. Baird accepted a job with Challenger Airlines in Laramie as a station agent, teletype operator (two man station), Sandy was born on December 5, 1948 while Baird was on duty.

Baird and Marge felt that Laramie was not a suitable place to raise children or have a job so they returned to Denver and accepted a job with Air Freight Airline at Stapleton as a station agent. There were 8 airplanes, family owned, WWII C-46 Army surplus airplanes. Planes flew from San Francisco to Los Angeles, St. Louis and Newark, New Jersey. Slick Airlines - 6 employees, Slick rented property at Stapleton. Their cargo consisted mainly of flowers from florists sending to the east coast and replacing animals to zoos that had been closed down during the war. When the airline closed their office in Denver, they offered hi a job in Omaha, Baird declined. He stayed in Denver and worked at Continental Airlines as a Radio Operator at Stapleton Field.

Their second child Deb was born on December 30, 1950. Long hours at work and purchasing a new home became to stressful, Baird left the airline field and went to work for the City of Aurora as a Water Department employee in 1950. He read water meters, inspected water line installations under the city engineer and assisted in starting a new sewage treatment plant. A new home was purchased in Aurora (1780 Iola).

In 1976 they sold their home on Iola street and purchased a new home at 3048 W. Layton in Englewood. Baird took a job at Martin Company Factory at southwest Jefferson County as Sewage Treatment/Industrial Waste Treatment. He was transferred to Martin (MRD) Manufacturing, Research & Development as a Solution Analyst. Due to frequent layoffs it was necessary to transfer to another department, Quality Control/Safety Engineering/Sewage Industrial Waste Treatment.

On January 18, 1959 daughter Karen was born.

Baird applied for a Sewage Treatment Job at Metro Denver Sewage Plant which was under construction. He accepted and reported to work in April 1966. He remained with them until April 1990 as a Lab Tech, Instrumentation Tech Equipment Evaluation. He retired in April 1990 at the age of 66.

He filled his retirement years reading voraciously, working with telescopes, computers and creating various science projects at home. He treated everyone with kindness, dignity, humor and intelligence. We are blessed to have had him in our lives.

Graveside services at Fort Logan National Cemetery on May 16, 2012 at 11:15 a.m. (staging area C).

Service Summary

Graveside Service

11:15 AM Wed May 16, 2012

Fort Logan National Cemetery

3698 South Sheridan Blvd

Denver, Colorado 80236

-<http://www.bullockmortuary.com/obits/printpdf.php?oid=177805&cs=6b1bacd02ac24c2816107861348799c1&ap=1>  
(9/8/14)