

77 SQUADRON RAF



RAAF AIRMEN KILLED WHILST ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH 77 SQUADRON RAF WORLD WAR II

ARCHIBALD T.
ARMSTRONG G. A.
BIRD H.W.
BLAIR R.A.W.
BRAID A.A.
BURNS A.J.
CRAIN A.I.
DATE J.M.
DE VIS S.G.
ELLIS H.A.L.
FLETCHER D.
GALVIN K.F.
GROB N.C.
HOLLINGWORTH R.M.
HYDE G.L.
IRVING D.A.
JOHNSON A.W.
JORDAN A.
KRONE J.D.

MACKAY S.W.
MANTELL J.M.
MATHERS F.E.
MORRISON K.W.
MORRISON R. De B.
NEWELL N.L.
NOTT J.S.
O'GRADY F.J.
O'MEARA J.P.
PEGGS R.J.
PRATT L.G.
PYE J.D.
SAMSON L.F.
SIMS E.A.
STEVENS B.H.
TIERNAN P.E.T.
WARREN R.J.
WILSON J.L.



INTRODUCTION

My initial contact with 77 Squadron RAF Association occurred when I was Secretary of 77 Squadron RAAF Association and I found the enthusiasm for their Squadron was infectious.

This small project, like so many research projects, started with a chance remark from a friend who wondered what had happened to someone her father knew when he was in 77 Squadron RAF. The 77 Squadron RAF Association website proved an invaluable source of information and Rachel Semlyen, their secretary, proved once again why we have women in such positions. After printing off the list of casualties from the web site I noticed a discrepancy with the numbers of Australians who died whilst with the squadron and the listing at the Australian War Memorial.

William Foote DFC, their President, then set about writing out by hand the names, numbers and rank of all the Australian RAAF members who died whilst attached to 77 Squadron RAF and I was able to pick up the missing men. By this time I was addicted.

Information is lacking on so many of the casualties owing to a number of factors - RAAF records have not been digitised at this point in time and the fact that so many were young, unmarried men with no children to follow and supply photographs and information.

The photographs taken of the airmen's ID do not lend themselves to enlargement, other photographs have come from the AWM, newspapers and family members.

The dedication of a Memorial to Bomber Command in Green Park in 2012 was something Australians had been waiting for since the Canberra, ACT, dedication to Bomber Command in 2005. It is with some pride I include photographs of both memorials.

Thanks must be extended to various family members who helped gather information, among them John Bado (Thomas Archibald) and John Wilson (John Wilson)

My special thanks must go to William Foote and Rachel Semlyen of 77 Squadron RAF Association, my husband, Garry, a former CO of 77 Squadron RAAF who fielded endless questions about aircraft.

This project is still a work in progress and shall be added to as more information becomes available. The mini biographies are, of necessity brief, for most airmen there is a lot more information than what appears in this collection. If anyone wishes I can supply full service records. I am in Canberra at the National Archives twice yearly and will be only too happy to check records that are not digitized. In some cases the records have not yet been examined but I can request for them to be examined if needs be.

I need to mention also photographs of headstones - the headstones photographed with a small cross in front were taken by Australian Federal Police, Federal Agent, Arthur Evreniadis who also placed the crosses. His photographs are not exclusively 77 Squadron so worth a look for other airmen. Others mentioned with CWGC can be purchased from www.twgpp.org



77 SQUADRON ROYAL AIR FORCE

"To be, rather than seem"

77 Squadron was formed at Edinburgh, Scotland on 1st October 1916. During World War I the squadron was involved with home defence and the training of night-flying pilots. No 77 was disbanded in 1919.

June 1937 saw the re-forming, as a bomber squadron, of 77 Squadron at Finningley in Yorkshire. The squadron flew Whitleys from Driffield and at the start of World War II was employed dropping propaganda material, referred to as Nickels, over enemy territory. Usually the Whitleys operated from an advanced base in France and distributed the Nickels over Ruhr, Vienna, Prague and Warsaw. The squadron was also used for reconnaissance and security patrols during that time and during these patrols would drop bombs on seaplane and harbour base landing lights at or near Borkum, Sylt and Nordeney.

The spring of 1940 saw the squadron deployed bombing in earnest and in March and June they were involved in a number of "firsts". March - the first attack on an enemy land target (Hornum, on the island of Sylt), May - the first big attack on the German mainland (the exits of Munchen-Gladback) and June the squadron took part in the first attack on Italy (primary target the Fiat works at Turin).

The squadron continued its offensive against enemy land targets until April 1941 and in early May was moved to Chivenor, North Devon, for temporary duty with No 19 Group, Coastal Command, mainly employed on flying anti-submarine patrols over the Bay of Biscay.

After moving back to Yorkshire the squadron began to convert to Halifaxes in October 1942 and was ready for the Battle of Ruhr which opened in the following spring. The squadron maintained Halifax aircraft for the remainder of the European campaign. As well as being prominent in the bomber offensive it also participated in Bomber Command's very successful mine laying campaign. No 77 also shared, in September and October 1944, the task of flying nearly half a million gallons of petrol to an airfield near Brussels for the Second Army which was desperately short of fuel for its lorries and tanks.

The last operational Mission for World War II was on the 25th April 1945 when 19 Halifaxes bombed gun batteries on the island of Wangerooge.

During the period of World War II 77 Squadron was stationed at the following Bases:

Driffield - July 1938 to August 1940. With detachments to France and Kinloss.

Linton-on-Ouse - August 1940 to October 1940

Topcliffe - October 1940 to September 1941

Leeming - September 1941 to May 1942

Chivenor - May 1942 to October 1942

Elvington - October 1942 to May 1944

Full Sutton - May 1944 to May 1945.

SOME USEFUL REFERENCES

Wingless - by Tom Roberts - a wonderful book that contains a biographical index of Australian Airmen detained in Wartime.

RAF History - Bomber Command 60th Anniversary-

Alan Storr - RAF Fatalities Series

National Archives of Australia - www.naa.gov.au

Australian War Memorial - www.awm.gov.au

RAF Bomber Command - Losses of the 2 WW - by W R Chorley.

The Wartime Memories Project - RAF Elvington -
<http://www.wartimememories.co.uk>

The War Graves Photographic Project - <http://www.twgpp.org>

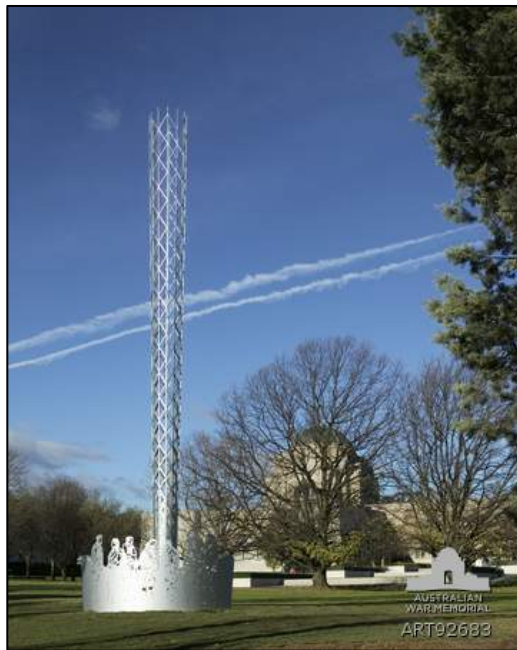
77 Squadron RAF Association - www.77squadronrafassociation

Australians at Rest in the UK (Beth Page) www.ww2austburialsuk.weebly.com

Commemorative Cross Project - www.awm.gov.au



**BOMBER COMMAND MEMORIAL
GREEN PARK, LONDON
DEDICATED JUNE 2012**



**BOMBER COMMAND MEMORIAL
CANBERRA AUSTRALIA
DEDICATED IN 2005**



**AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL
CANBERRA**

THOMAS ARCHIBALD

412606



photo John Bado

Thomas Archibald was born at Hamilton in Scotland on 11 September 1910 the son, and second eldest child, of John and Janet Archibald. His sister, Mary, had come to Australia in 1927 and the rest of the family followed in 1928.



He is listed as a salesman on his enlistment papers and his religion declared as Presbyterian. Thomas married Perla Doris Durward (née Campbell) on 27 December 1941 at Scots Church, Russell Street, Melbourne by Rev James Burns. Witnesses at the wedding were Franklin Cooper and D. Mitchell

Thomas enlisted at No 2 Recruiting Centre, Sydney, 20 July 1941 and was immediately sent to 2 ITS and then a few days later moved to 10 EFTS at Temora in NSW. He was then posted to 1 SFTS at Point Cook, Victoria on 13 December, 1941 having re-mustered to air crew (P5) on 8 September. He received his Flying Badge 27 February 1942 having flown DH82 and Oxford aircraft.

Scots Church, Melbourne

Thomas was then discharged from the RAAF, under AFR 115, on 29 April 1942 on being granted a commission and became a Pilot Officer the following day.

He embarked at Sydney 16 June 1942 on attachment to the RAF arriving United Kingdom 24 August 1942. On arrival in the UK he proceeded to Australia House for temporary duty. Thomas then trained with various units including 6AFU, 20 OTU before moving to Drifffield on 3rd March 1943.

He had been appointed Flying Officer 30 October 1942.

Posted to 77 Squadron RAF 7 April 1943 to commence flying duties on 28 April and appointed an Acting Flight Lieutenant the same day. The missing days are accounted for as Thomas was granted leave until 28 April. The same month he was awarded a DFC, see citation following.

On 13 May 1943 Halifax II 865 returning from Duisburg after dropping bombs was unable to close the bomb doors thus reducing their speed, after a series of unfortunate events the plane crashed just out of Bishop Wilton, near Pocklington RAF Base, at 4.20 am English time. Thomas was killed in the crash along with Sergeant Gerard Scully, Bomb Aimer. The remaining crew were all injured - Sergeant C Hewitson, Sergeant J Gerry, Sergeant George Marlow, Sergeant Frederick K Smith and Sergeant J Currie.

Thomas was laid to rest in St Catherine's Churchyard in the pretty village of Barmby Moor, Yorkshire, the ceremony being presided over by the RAF Chaplain and the Rev A E Sturdy, Vicar of Barmby. (Row C – Grave 8). There are 54 airmen from WWII and one from WWI buried at St Catherine's.

Thomas is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Roll of Honour in Sydney.

The towns of Pocklington and Barmby have remembered lost air-crew in a very significant way. As new roads are designated they are named after men who are buried in the Commonwealth War Cemetery at Barmby Moor.

In York Minster there is a memorial to lost World War II airmen based in the Yorkshire area. Thomas' name is recorded in the Memorial Book.



Halifax Bomber similar to the one flown by Thomas Archibald (Wikipedia)



Archibald Close, Pocklington (Google Earth)



Commonwealth War Cemetery

St Catherine's, Barmby-on-the-Moor, Yorkshire (CWGC)



Scottish United Services Museum within Edinburgh Castle



*Flying Officer
Thomas Archibald (John Bado)*

There are two other Australians buried in the Barmby Church yard –
Sgt James David Garrow (404529) 405 Squadron and
Sgt Clive Gordon Lord (402127) 58 Squadron

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS



Flying Officer Thomas ARCHIBALD (Aus 412606)
Royal Australian Air Force
No 77 Squadron RAF

One night in April 1943, this officer captained an aircraft which attacked Essen. Whilst over the target area the aircraft was repeatedly attacked by fire from the ground defences, and one engine was put out of action. It was then discovered that one bomb had failed to release. Displaying great determination, Flying Officer Archibald made a second run over the target and released the bomb successfully. His aircraft sustained much damage but he flew it back to base with one engine unserviceable. This officer displayed great courage and outstanding devotion to duty.

Promulgated in The London Gazette – Third Supplement - Tuesday 25 May, 1943, page 2320

Flying Officer Archibald's wife, Perla, received his DFC from the Governor General of Australia, Lord Gowrie, at Admiralty House, Sydney on 16 June, 1944. Perla passed away at the Concord (NSW) Repatriation Hospital in Sydney in November 1955.

Thomas Archibald - 412606

DFC
1939-45 STAR
Aircrew Europe Star
Defence Medal
War Medal 1939-45
Australian Service Medal 1939-45

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HONOURS AND AWARDS
"IMMEDIATE AWARD"

Particulars of meritorious service

This officer and crew were detailed to attack ESSEN on the night of 30 April/1st May 1943, in Halifax II. JB865 "J". Target area was reached at 02.46 hours, and bombing run was executed according to Flight Plan at 02.56 hours, Blind Bombing Technique being successfully employed. Bombs were released from 19,000 feet, during the process of which the aircraft was repeatedly hit by heavy flak, one burst rendering the starboard inner engine unserviceable, which was immediately feathered. The aircraft was off target with bomb doors closed, but upon inspection of the bomb bays it was discovered that a 1,000 lb GP bomb had "hung up". The aircraft was immediately turned to port, and the target again attacked on the correct heading, in accordance with Operation Order, sky markers again being bombed from 17,000 feet, and the bomb successfully released. F/O Archibald reached base, and made an excellent landing without further incident, but an inspection of the aircraft revealed extensive damage by flak to the tail wheel, fuselage, starboard mainplane, port elevator, and port outer mainplane, which together with the unserviceable engine gives added prominence to the courage and tenacity of this officer in pressing his attack in the face of very considerably difficulty. Having lost one engine at a critical stage of the operation, it would have been permissible to have released the suspended bomb on a reciprocal course, but this Officer's devotion to duty was of such a high standard, that maintenance of aim on the primary target was pressed home with the utmost vigour and determination. I strongly recommend that this gallantry in action be recognised by an immediate award of the D.F.C.

Date: 2nd May 1943.

A G Lowe
Wing Commander, Commanding
No 77 Squadron R.A.F.

REMARKS BY STATION COMMANDER This Australian Officer's devotion to duty was in the best traditions of the Service, when with a disabled a/c he pressed home a second attack on his primary target, despite suffering considerable damage from enemy fire during the first bombing run. The fact that his flight back to Base was without incident speaks highly of his excellent airmanship in view of extensive damage to his a/c. I strongly recommend that his determination and devotion to duty be recognised by the immediate award of the D.F.C.

Date 4th May 43

Group Captain Commanding R.A.F. Elvington

REMARKS BY BASE COMMANDER

This Officer displayed courage and devotion to duty of the highest order. He is an Officer who will lead and inspire others.

Recommended for the immediate award of the D.F.C.

Date: 6th May, 1943

G.A. WALKER
Commodore, Commanding R.A.F. Base, Pocklington

REMARKS BY AIR OFFICER COMMANDING

This Australian Officer, just starting his first tour of Operations, has shown the courage and determination so necessary in a successful Bomber Captain. He has set a fine example and I strongly recommend the immediate award of the D.F.C.

Date: 8th May, 1943

..... Carr
Air Vice Marshal
Air Officer Commanding
No 4 Group R.A.F.



THIRD SUPPLEMENT TO The London Gazette

Of FRIDAY, the 21st of MAY, 1943

Published by Authority

Registered as a newspaper

TUESDAY, 25 MAY, 1943

Air Ministry, 25th May, 1943.

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy:—

Distinguished Service Order.

Acting Wing Commander Herbert Ashton CLARK, D.F.C. (43414), No. 37 Squadron.

This officer has rendered valuable service owing to his exceptional ability, great drive and unflagging devotion to duty. During a period of intense air fighting in April, 1943, his tireless efforts were reflected in the fine work accomplished by the squadron. In addition to his work on the ground, Wing Commander Clark took part in numerous sorties in Tripolitania and Tunisia, all of which were brilliantly executed. He has displayed outstanding leadership, skill and courage which have won the admiration of all.

Acting Wing Commander Jack Fendick ROULSTON, D.F.C. (37640), No. 55 Squadron.

This officer is a brilliant leader, whose courage and tenacity in pressing home his attacks in the face of fierce opposition, have been a splendid example. In April, 1943, he flew the leading aircraft of a formation detailed to attack the airfield at Soliman. When nearing the target, the windscreen of his aircraft was shattered by splinters from a bursting shell. Pieces of the broken screen, smoke and dust filled the cockpit. Unperturbed, Wing Commander Roulston led his formation to the objective which was heavily bombed. By his skill and determination, this officer contributed materially to the success of the operation.

Major John Edward PARSONSON (P.102656), South African Air Force, No. 5 Squadron.

This officer is a fearless, determined and skilful fighter, whose example has proved most inspiring. On two occasions his aircraft has been shot down but, displaying great fortitude, Major Parsonson succeeded in rejoining his squadron. In recent air operations in the Tunisian theatre, this officer flew with distinction. In April, he participated in an engagement during which a convoy of transport aircraft was destroyed off the Tunisian coast. A few days later, he led a formation in an attack on a large number of similar aircraft over the Gulf of Tunis. During the action 20 of them were shot down, 2 being destroyed by Major Parsonson. His fine fighting qualities have been worthy of high praise.

Acting Squadron Leader Roland Prosper BEAMONT, D.F.C. (41819), No. 609 Squadron.

This officer is an outstanding leader, whose great skill, drive and determination have contributed in a large measure to the high standard of operational efficiency of the squadron which has achieved great success. Since January, 1943, Squadron Leader Beamont has put out of action 13 locomotives and many lorries in determined attacks at night. This officer has set a most inspiring example.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Squadron Leader Robert Henry GIBBES, D.S.O., D.F.C. (Aus.714), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 3 (R.A.A.F.) Squadron.

This officer has displayed exceptional leadership, skill and courage, contributing in a large measure to the success of the squadron he commands. On one occasion, during an attack on an airfield at Bir Dufan, his aircraft was shot down. After walking for about 50 miles he was picked up by friendly forces and enabled to rejoin his squadron. Since then, Squadron Leader Gibbes has taken part in many sorties, attacking the enemy with vigour. He has destroyed at least 10 and damaged several other enemy aircraft.

Acting Squadron Leader Raymond Hiley HARRIES, D.F.C. (87447), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 91 Squadron.

This officer is a highly efficient squadron commander whose great keenness and energetic leadership have set a worthy example. In recent operations he has destroyed 3 enemy aircraft, shared in the destruction of another and damaged 3 more.

Acting Squadron Leader Lewis Macdonald HODGES, D.F.C. (33408), No. 161 Squadron.

This officer has completed many sorties, achieving much success. He is an extremely efficient and gallant flight commander, whose leadership and unflinching devotion to duty have proved inspiring.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Squadron Leader Hugh Beresford VERITY (72507), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 161 Squadron.

Squadron Leader Verity has participated in 118 sorties. He is a skilful pilot whose example of determination and devotion to duty have proved inspiring. He has rendered excellent service, contributing materially to the high standard of operational efficiency of the squadron.

Acting Squadron Leader Francis MURPHY (N.Z.411928), Royal New Zealand Air Force, No. 486 (N.Z.) Squadron.

This officer is a skilful pilot. He has taken part in many determined attacks on shipping while, in air combat, he has destroyed 4 enemy aircraft. His successes have been worthily earned.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Moire Alphonse Jean PIERRE (133525), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 158 Squadron.

In air operations, this officer displayed courage and fortitude in keeping with the highest traditions of the Royal Air Force.

Flying Officer Thomas ARCHIBALD (Aus.412606), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 77 Squadron.

One night in April, 1943, this officer captained an aircraft which attacked Essen. Whilst over the target area the aircraft was repeatedly hit by fire from the ground defences, and one engine was put out of action. It was then discovered that one bomb had failed to release. Displaying great determination, Flying Officer Archibald made a second run over the target and released the bomb successfully. His aircraft sustained much damage but he flew it back to base with one engine unserviceable. This officer displayed great courage and outstanding devotion to duty.

Flying Officer Frank Ernest RYMILLS, D.F.M. (115338), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 161 Squadron.

This officer has completed a large number of operations, some of them of a very hazardous nature. He is a courageous and skilful pilot whose example has won the confidence of all with whom he has flown. He has displayed great determination and his successes have been worthily earned.

Flying Officer John Garn WRIGHT (Can./J.7233), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 112 Squadron.

This officer has taken part in a large number of sorties, including numerous fighter bomber attacks against enemy airfields and mechanised transport. In air combat he has destroyed at least 3 enemy aircraft. Flying Officer Wright has displayed great keenness, skill and determination.

Pilot Officer Peter John Oswald BUCK (N.Z.413377), Royal New Zealand Air Force, No. 75 (N.Z.) Squadron.

Pilot Officer John Henry SYMONS (Can./J.16507), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 75 (N.Z.) Squadron.

One night in April, 1943, Pilot Officers Buck and Symons were pilot and navigator respectively of an aircraft detailed to attack Duisburg. Whilst over the target area, the aircraft was attacked by an enemy fighter and sustained much damage. The rear gunner was mortally wounded, while Pilot Officer Symons was wounded in the hand. Pilot Officer Buck succeeded in evading the attacker and set course for base. On the return flight, the damaged bomber became difficult to control and, when 1 of the engines failed, the aircraft began to lose height. All moveable equipment was jettisoned and, height being maintained, Pilot Officer Buck flew the aircraft to base where he effected a perfect crash-landing. During the return flight, Pilot Officer Symons, in spite of his painful injury, did all within his power to help his pilot, obtaining a number of fixes which proved of great assistance. In a most difficult situation, these officers displayed courage, skill and determination of a high order.

Pilot Officer Frank Norman PLUM (143236), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 115 Squadron.

This officer has completed 24 sorties and has invariably displayed great determination to complete his tasks successfully. In April, 1943, he piloted an aircraft detailed to attack Duisburg. Shortly after the take-off, engine trouble developed. Despite this, Pilot Officer Plum continued his flight to the target which he bombed successfully, afterwards flying the aircraft safely to base. He displayed great skill and resolution throughout.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Flight Lieutenant Arthur Victor DUFFILL (86398), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 487 (N.Z.) Squadron.

Flying Officer Frederick John STARKIE (118630), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 487 (N.Z.) Squadron.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

1290249 Sergeant Alan William TURNBULL, No. 487 (N.Z.) Squadron.

1461821 Sergeant Lawrence Henry NEILL, No. 487 (N.Z.) Squadron.

Early in May, 1943, Flight Lieutenant Duffill, Flying Officer Starkie and Sergeants Turnbull and Neill, were pilot, navigator, wireless operator/air gunner and air gunner respectively of one of a formation of aircraft detailed to attack a target in Holland. Whilst crossing the enemy coast the formation was intercepted by a large force of enemy fighters. In the combats which followed, Sergeant Turnbull coolly gave a commentary on the attacker's movements and later manned a position until he was seriously wounded. Sergeant Neill used his guns effectively but was wounded in the legs by the enemy's fire, which also caused a fire to break out in the rear of the fuselage. Flying Officer Starkie, acting with great promptitude, quickly extinguished the flames. This accomplished, he tended his wounded comrade, Sergeant Turnbull, and rendered efficient first aid after carrying him across a gaping hole, which had been torn in the fuselage. Meanwhile, Flight Lieutenant Duffill was taking skilful evading action, while Sergeant Neill despite his injuries continued to engage the enemy until all attacks ceased. Flight Lieutenant Duffill, displaying superb airmanship, eventually flew the badly damaged bomber to base. In extremely harassing circumstances, these members of aircraft crew displayed courage, fortitude and determination of a high order.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Flying Officer Charles Beatty ANDERSON (Aus.416735), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 460 (R.A.A.F.) Squadron.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

Aus. 415079 Sergeant Herbert Leonard FUHRMAN, Royal Australian Air Force, No. 460 (R.A.A.F.) Squadron.

One night in April, 1943, Flying Officer Anderson and Sergeant Fuhrman were navigator and pilot respectively of an aircraft detailed to attack Stettin. Whilst over the Baltic Sea, the aircraft was repeatedly hit by fire from an armed ship. One engine was put out of action, the tail unit was damaged, restricting practically all rudder movements, while a shell penetrated the bomb bay, exploding amongst the incendiaries. Flying Officer Anderson was wounded in the thigh and buttock by splinters of shrapnel which entered his cabin. The situation was perilous but Sergeant Fuhrman decided to attempt to fly the damaged bomber home. Displaying superb airmanship and great endurance he eventually accomplished his purpose, flying the damaged bomber to an airfield in this country where he effected a masterly landing before collapsing at the controls. During the return flight, Flying Officer Anderson, despite his injuries, refused to leave his post and continued his navigational duties, rendering great assistance to his pilot. Both these members of the crew displayed exceptional courage, skill and fortitude in the face of a trying ordeal.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

Can./R.98109 Flight Sergeant Francis Joseph HIGGINS, Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 427 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.

Flight Sergeant Higgins piloted an aircraft detailed to attack a target in S.W. Germany one night in April, 1943. Shortly after bombing the target the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire. Much damage was sustained. In difficult circumstances, Flight Sergeant Higgins flew the aircraft to an air field in this country, where he effected a successful crash-landing. He displayed great courage and determination.

Can./R.56057 Sergeant Joseph Pierre Gaston BLANCHET, Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 35 Squadron.

633143 Sergeant Ronald Horace David WILSON, No. 35 Squadron.

These airmen have displayed high qualities of courage and fortitude in air operations. Their exemplary conduct has been worthy of the highest praise.

GORDON ARTHUR ARMSTRONG

423597



AWM P07267.001

Gordon Arthur Armstrong was born 23 July 1922 at Warrawee, NSW the son of Wentworth and Gladys Armstrong of Gordon (Sydney). Gordon attended Barker College in Sydney for his high school education followed by an accountancy degree. He was working as an Audit Clerk for Harris and Harne, Sydney before enlisting in July 1942.

Gordon was in the 1st Australian Army Battalion from 1940 to 1942 before deciding to try the RAAF. He trained as a Bomb Aimer in Australia and Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme and was posted to 77 Squadron RAF at Full Sutton, Yorkshire.

Embarked at Melbourne 2 November 1942 arriving in Canada on November 27. Gordon had an appendectomy operation at Dartmouth Station Hospital in Canada on 20 May 1943. Once fully recovered he finished his training and left for England on 29 June 1943 arriving there a week later on 7 July 1943. Then it was onto 27 OTU for further training, he was promoted to Flight Sergeant on 2 October whilst at OTU. 41 Base HQ followed in December finally arriving at 77 Squadron 23 March 1944.

Gordon was killed alongside his six other crew members on the night of 17 June 1944 when his Halifax III, serial number NA508, was hit with flack during a raid on the synthetic oil works at Sterkrade, Germany and crashed in the marshy land at Amstelveen (Noord-Brabant), near Amsterdam, Holland.

Aged 21 at the time of his death.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer R A W Blair - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H L Moore - Flight Engineer
RAAF	Pilot Officer L G Pratt - Observer
RAAF	Flight Sergeant G A Armstrong - Air Bomber
RAAF	Warrant Officer J P O'Meara - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flying Officer J M Date - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant D G Tastin - Tail Gunner

A 1947 report by a Missing Research & Enquiry team stated "*the Communal Police at Neuwer-Amstel reported that the aircraft crashed in flames at Neuwer-Amstel on the night of 16/17 June, 1944. German documents confirmed that only one body was recovered that of WO O'Meara*". He is buried at the Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery, Netherlands.

Until 1990 the other six crew members had no known grave and their names are commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, Surrey. It was in June of that year that the wreckage of NA508 was uncovered by the Recovery Team of the Royal Netherlands Air Force, including the remains of five of the crew, who were buried at the Bergen op Zoom Canadian War Cemetery on 8 October 1991.

Gordon is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Roll of Honour at Gordon, NSW and the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey.



Back Row – Left to Right

L Pratt, J Date, D Tustin, H Moore

Front Row left to Right

J O'Meara, R Blair, G Armstrong

(donor of photograph unknown)



Bergen-op-Zoom Canadian War Cemetery

HAROLD WILLIAM BIRD

417330



Harold Bird was born 3 August 1915 the son of David and Hilda Bird, at Ethelton in South Australia and was employed as a clerk for Goldsborough Mort & Co, a wool and stockbroking firm. He married Joyce Emily on 18 November 1939.

Harold enlisted in the Reserve on 23 September 1941 and then the Citizens Air Force on 25 April 1942. He received his flying badge on 5 February 1943. Listed among the planes he flew in Australia were Tiger Moths, Ansons, Oxfords and Whitleys. He embarked for the United Kingdom on 6 March 1943 arriving there 17 April 1943 after various postings around England he arrived at 77 Squadron on 8 May 1944 after having completed time at 17 OTU and 41 Base. Commission to Pilot Officer 20 February 1944.

On 17 June 1944, whilst on a mission to Sterkrade in Germany to bomb a synthetic oil works, Halifax Mk 545 was hit by flak and ditched in the North Sea.

Pilot Officer Bird's body was recovered from the sea and interred in the General Cemetery at West Terachelling, an island off the coast of Holland. Following exhumation after the war his body was formally identified and re-interred in Grave 119. The grave was adopted by a local girl, Jannie Buren, who maintained the site until the Commonwealth War Graves Commission took over the task. A temporary cross was erected at that time.

Three Australians were members of the crew of Halifax III Mk 545 - Pilot Officer Harold Bird; Flying Officer Stuart Mackay, Air Bomber and Flight Sergeant Robert Warren, Wireless Operator. The other members of the crew were - Sergeant R A Castle-Hall, Flight Engineer; Sergeant A Freemantle, Navigator; Flight Sergeant F A Meegan, Air Gunner and Sergeant J A Lauder, Rear Gunner. All crew members perished.

Halifax 545 was one of seven aircraft from the Squadron that failed to return from the mission.

It was later established that the aircraft crashed in the sea off the coast of Holland, and all the crew were killed. Pilot Officer Bird and Sergeant Castle-Hall are buried in the Terschelling General Cemetery. Sergeant Freemantle is buried in the Sage War Cemetery, Oldenburg, Niedersachsen, Germany. Flight Sergeant Warren is buried in the Texel Cemetery Noord-Holland. Sergeant Lauder is buried in the Vlieland General Cemetery, Friesland. Flying Officer Mackay and Flt Sergeant Meeghan have no known graves.

Pilot Officer Bird is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial

Private Casualty Advices

Mrs. H. W. Bird, of Washington street, Hilton, has been notified that her husband, PO Harold Bird, previously reported missing on June 17, 1944, is reported to have lost his life on that date. He was captain of a Halifax bomber which failed to return to base from operations over Germany. He was the elder son of Capt. and Mrs. D. Bird, of Ethelton. Before enlisting he was on the staff of Goldsbrough, Mort and Co., and left for overseas in February, 1943.



PO Bird

Pte. Watters

Mrs. L. L. Watters, of Kenton Valley has been notified that her husband, Pte. Laurence Lovelock Watters, died of illness in a Borneo POW camp on December 22, 1944. Pte. Watters, who was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Watters, of Brentwood, enlisted in June, 1940, and after spending several months in Central Australia, was sent to Malaya in 1941. He had been a prisoner in Japanese hands since the fall of Singapore.

*The Advertiser (S.A.)
Wednesday 27 June 1945*



*Terschelling (West-Terschelling)
General Cemetery*



*Pilot Officer
Harold William Bird (NAA)*

ROBERT ALEXANDER WALTON BLAIR

415498

Robert Blair was born on 18 January 1922 the son of Robert and Vera Blair at Perth, Western Australia. He worked for the Bank of New South Wales as a clerk before enlistment on 11 July 1940 he was accepted to the 25 Light Horse Regiment and discharged on 11 September 1940 to join the RAAF. (RAAF records not digitized)

Halifax NA 508 took off from RAF Full Sutton, Yorkshire at 2315 hours on the night of 16/17 June 1944, detailed to bomb Sterkrade, Germany.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer R A W Blair - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H L Moore - Flight Engineer
RAAF	Pilot Officer L G Pratt - Observer
RAAF	Flight Sergeant G A Armstrong - Air Bomber
RAAF	Warrant Officer J P O'Meara - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flying Officer J M Date - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant D G Tastin - Tail Gunner

A 1947 report by a Missing Research & Enquiry team stated "*the Communal Police at Neuwer-Amstel reported that the aircraft crashed in flames at Neuwer-Amstel on the night of 16/17 June, 1944. German documents confirmed that only one body was recovered that of WO O'Meara*" He is buried at the Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery, Netherlands.

The other six crew members had no known grave and their names are commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, Surrey. In June 1990, the wreckage of NA508 was uncovered by the Recovery Team of the Royal Netherlands Air Force, including the unidentified remains of five of the crew, who were later buried at Bergen op Zoom Canadian War Cemetery on 8 October 1991.

Pilot Officer Blair is also remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Perth, Western Australia, Roll of Honour.



Back Row – Left to Right

L Pratt, J Date, D Tastin, H Moore

Front Row left to Right

J O'Meara, R Blair, G Armstrong

(donor of photograph unknown)



ALEXANDER ALBERT BRAID 408562



AWM P04286.001

Alexander Albert Braid was born 21 April 1918 the son of Alexander and Alberta Braid at North Melbourne, Victoria. Before enlisting on 27 April 1941 Alexander was a practising Architect. He married June Beverly Thomas in 1942. *(RAAF records not digitized)*

On transfer to the United Kingdom he was an observer with 77 Squadron RAF. Warrant Officer Braid was killed whilst on operations when Halifax MZ715 was lost returning from a raid over Sterkrade in Germany on the night of 16 June 1944.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer A I Crain - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant V Gledhill - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flying Officer T R Davies - Navigator
RAAF	Warrant Officer A A Braid - Air Bomber
RAF	Warrant Officer A J Owen Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant P E T Tiernan - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant A J Burns - Rear Gunner

The aircraft exploded in the air throwing Warrant Officer Owen clear, injured he was hospitalized and spent the remainder of the war as a POW. All other members of the crew were killed. Alexander is buried in The Soldiers Cemetery, Uden, Noord Brabant, Holland Grave 86.

Warrant Officer Braid is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Melbourne Cenotaph at Kew, Melbourne, Victoria.



Uden War Cemetery, Noord Brabant, Holland



*Warrant Officer
Alexander Albert Braid*

ALFRED JOHN BURNS

424711



The son of Arthur and Emily Burns he was born June 1922 at Mascot, NSW and worked as a clerk before enlistment and was firstly in the Australian Army Pay Corps, November 1941 until September 1942, when he elected to join the RAAF. Alfred enlisted in Sydney on 7 October 1942 qualified as an air gunner on 22 July 1943 and was almost immediately sent to England leaving Sydney on 11 August reaching England 9 October. (*RAAF records not digitized*)

He went straight to 11 PDRC at Brighton, did a stint at 41 Base before joining 77 Squadron on 25 April 1944 after having been promoted to Flight Sergeant while at 21 OTU on 22 January 1944

Flight Sergeant Burns was killed 17 June 1944 and is buried in a joint grave in the Parish Cemetery Dodewaard, Netherlands, Grave 316. The Commonwealth War Graves at Dodewaard Cemetery contains two Australian airmen and two unidentified British soldiers.

He shares a grave with Flight Sergeant Patrick Edward Thomas Tiernan who was also on the ill-fated Halifax MZ 715 which was returning from a raid over Sterkrade in Germany.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer A I Crain - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant V Gledhill - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flying Officer T R Davies - Navigator
RAAF	Warrant Officer A A Braid - Air Bomber
RAF	Warrant Officer A J Owen - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant P E T Tiernan - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant A J Burns - Rear Gunner

Flight Sergeant Burns is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Roll of Honour, Lidcombe, NSW.



*Lidcombe War Memorial
Sydney, NSW*



Flight Sergeant A J Burns



The citizens of Dodewaard in the Netherlands have been tending the graves of Australian airmen Patrick Tiernan, from Murgon, and Alfred Burns, from Sydney since they were shot down over their town during World War II. In 2014 they conducted a Memorial Day in honour of the two airmen. Those who travelled to the Netherlands for the occasion included the Murgon school principal, Greg Smith and school captains, Geoffrey Kinsella and Kirsten Upton photographed with the memorial display mounted opposite the graves of Alfred Burns and Patrick Tiernan. *southburnett.com.au*

ALAN IRVINE CRAIN

415308

Alan Irvine Crain was born 27 March 1923 to Wallace and Eileen Crain in Perth, Western Australia. He enlisted in his home town of Perth. (RAAF records not digitized)

He was flying Halifax MZ 715 on the night of 16/17 June 1944 when returning from a raid over Sterkrade in Germany. The plane exploded in the air, Warrant Officer Owen was thrown clear and captured to remain a POW until wars end. All other members of the crew were killed.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer A I Crain - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant V Gledhill - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flying Officer T R Davies - Navigator
RAAF	Warrant Officer A A Braid - Air Bomber
RAF	Warrant Officer A J Owen - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant P E T Tiernan - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant A J Burns - Rear Gunner

Pilot Officer Crain is buried in the Uden War Cemetery, Netherlands 5-C-6. Alan is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Nedlands War Memorial, Western Australia.

Perth Pilot Loses Life In Ruhr Raid

Survival of an air-gunner in a Halifax bomber, shot down over Germany, led W.A. parents of the plane's missing pilot to hope that he was also safe. But the hopes have not been realised.

Word has been received that he lost his life and has been buried in Uden, North Brabant, Holland. Air-gunner was the only one saved.

He is late Pilot-Officer Alan Irvine Crain, member of a well-known Hollywood (WA) family.


Plane was brought down when returning from a raid over Sterkrade in the Ruhr.

P/O Crain was due for extensive leave following a heavy programme of operational flights over Germany.

"He thought D Day was the greatest thrill of his life," said sorrowing father Lieutenant Wally Crain yesterday. "He wrote and told us that it was most inspiring to fly a plane over the huge Europe-bound Armada."

P/O Crain was captain of a Halifax bomber. He was trained in W.A., went to England in 1942. Before enlisting he was an employee of C.O.R. Ltd in Perth.

The late flyer was approaching his 22nd birthday. He has a younger



brother, who is serving in England as a pilot.

News was a heavy blow to Lieut. and Mrs. Crain, who are particularly well known in Nedlands and Hollywood.

Lieut. Wally Crain has been a popular figure in sporting circles in Perth for many years. He played first grade cricket with Subiaco, North Perth and West Perth and was a keen hockey player.

Wally served in the Great War with the 10th Light Horse. When the second world war broke out on September 3, 1939, Wally was back in khaki again by September 4.

Late P.O. Crain

The Mirror, Saturday December 16, 1944

SAW WA PILOT'S DUTCH GRAVE

Some weeks ago "The Mirror" told of the death in action of Pilot Officer Alan Irvine Crain, of Hollywood, WA whose Halifax bomber was shot down as he was returning from a raid on the Ruhr.

F/O D J Thomson, member of a NZ Squadron, writes to say that he was in Uden, Holland, where P/O Crain is buried and talked with the Burgomaster there.

"His aircraft crashed at a little village called Dodevaard, a few miles west of Arnhem," he says. "That was on June 17 last. He and 3 other members of his crew were brought to Uden for burial on June 20. The cemetery number is One, and they are buried in Row 7. P/O Crain's grave is No 84.

"All the graves are marked out with a little hedge of flowers, and have flowers growing on them. Very shortly crosses will be placed on them; shortage of wood and paint has made this impossible before."

F/O Thomson's home is Geraldton, but he formerly worked in Perth.

The Mirror, Perth Saturday 9 June 1945 p2



*Pilot Officer Alan Irvine Crain
Uden War Cemetery
Noordt Brabant, Netherlands*

JOHN MATTHEW DATE

427807

Son of Matthew and Florence Date of Mornington, Victoria, John was born in Western Australia and enlisted from there. (RAAF records not digitized)

Halifax NA 508 took off from RAF Full Sutton, Yorkshire at 2315 hours on the night of 16/17 June 1944, detailed to bomb Sterkrade, Germany.

THE CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer R A W Blair - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H L Moore - Flight Engineer
RAAF	Pilot Officer L G Pratt - Observer
RAAF	Flight Sergeant G A Armstrong - Air Bomber
RAAF	Warrant Officer J P O'Meara - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flying Officer J M Date - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant D G Tastin - Tail Gunner

A 1947 report by a Missing Research & Enquiry team stated *"the Communal Police at Neuwer-Amstel reported that the aircraft crashed in flames at Neuwer-Amstel on the night of 16/17 June, 1944. German documents confirmed that only one body was recovered that of WO O'Meara"* He is buried at the Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery, Netherlands.

Until 1990 the other six crew members had no known grave and their names are commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, Surrey. It was in June of that year that the wreckage of NA508 was uncovered by the Recovery Team of the Royal Netherlands Air Force, including the remains of five of the crew, who were buried at the Bergen op Zoom Canadian War Cemetery on 8 October 1991.

Flying Officer Date is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial

DATE F/O John (RAAF)- A loving tribute to our gallant Friend presumed killed in air operations over Germany Jun 17, 1944.
Inserted by P/O Charles Bennetts
(Uranquinty, New South Wales)
Memories of happy days spent together, John

The Western Australian Monday 17 September 1945



Memorial Plaque King's Park, Perth Western Australia



Back Row – Left to Right

L Pratt, J Date, D Tustin, H Moore

Front Row left to Right

J O'Meara, R Blair, G Armstrong

(donor of photograph unknown)



SELWYN GEORGE DE VIS

423449



Photo: Bill Foote

Son of Frederick and Hazel de Vis of South Australia was born 11 July 1923. His father, Frederick Selwyn, served in World War I, leaving Australia on 31 January 1916 per the HMAT Wandilla, AND ALSO IN World War II. De Vis worked for the CSIRO on leaving school and at the time of enlisting was a laboratory technician at the Department of Anatomy Medical School at Sydney University and studying for a diploma in biological chemistry.
(RAAF records not digitized – only casualty report)

Halifax RG 529 - Merklinde near Dortmund on 19 March 1945. Target Witten. From investigation it was concluded that the two aircraft, a Lancaster and the Halifax, had in fact collided

“Investigation disclose that on the 19th March 1945 two aircraft crashed at Merklinde four miles west of Dortmund; both aircraft fell at the same time and within one hundred yards of each other. The bodies of all members of both crews were found in the wreckage by the Germans and there can be no doubt that all were killed instantly. Subsequent enquiries among the inhabitants fail to disclose the place of burial of the bodies and by the time the Missing Research and Enquiry service was operating in the area no identifiable wreckage remained.

It was thought that the crews had probably been buried in the main cemetery at Dortmund, but no reference to any burials from these crashes appeared in the cemetery register, which otherwise appeared to have been carefully kept. Recent investigations however, disclosed a group of unmarked and unregistered graves in the cemetery and, on exhumation, it was possible to establish the identity of your son and all members of his crew.” (RAAF Casualty File)

THE CREW:

RAF	Flight Lieutenant E Ward - Pilot
RAF	Flight Sergeant J A Anderson - Navigator
RAF	Sergeant E A C Pearce - Flight Engineer
RAF	Pilot Officer T M Kerr - Air Bomber
RAAF	Pilot Officer S G de Vis - Wireless Operator
RAF	Flight Sergeant J Dyke - Air Gunner
RAF	Flight Sergeant W J Edwards - Air Gunner

Fraulein Isle Schwars of Nerbeds, Germany wrote on two occasions to Mrs de Vis, Pilot Officer De Vis's mother, about the place of burial and the exhumation of his body. His uniform was identified as a different colour to the other crew members and the person was assumed by locals to be Australian.

Pilot Officer de Vis is buried in the Rheinberg War Cemetery Plot 13, Row F, Grave 9. He is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra High School and St John the Baptist Anglican Church, Reid ACT.



*Pilot Officer
Selwyn George de Vis*



Temporary Grave Marker



*The crew of Halifax RG 529. Flight Lieutenant Ward (Pilot) on far left
Pilot Officer Selwyn De Vis second from right. Photo: Bill Foote*

The photographs of Pilot Officer Selwyn De Vis, the crew and his headstone were supplied by William Foote DFC who was a member of 77 Squadron RAF.

HENRY ARTHUR LAURENCE ELLIS **412932**

Flight Lieutenant Ellis was born in May 1921 at Waverley, Sydney the son of Gordon and Fanny Ellis. He enlisted on 15 August 1941 at Sydney (*RAAF records not digitized*)

Awarded a DFC for a night attack on Leverkusen, Germany, in November 1943. Promulgated in the London Gazette on 17 December 1943 page 5488 and the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette on 6 January 1944. The DFC was presented to his father Gordon Ellis by the Governor General, Lord Gowrie, at Government House, Sydney on 16 February 1946.

Halifax LL 143 took off at 2331 hours from RAF Station Elvington, on an operation sortie on the night of 19/20 February 1944, the target Leipzig. The crew were on their 30th operation.

CREW:

RAAF	Flight Lieutenant H A L Ellis - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant J N Schofield - Flight Engineer
RAF	Pilot Officer P H J Mackie - Navigator
RAF	Pilot Officer R D Sullivan - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant H F Payne - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Pilot Officer C W G Graham - Air Gunner
RAAF	Pilot Officer D Fletcher - Air Gunner

Both aircraft and crew were lost without trace and the crew have no known grave. They are remembered on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, Surrey, UK.

Flight Lieutenant Ellis is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Waverley, NSW, Honour Roll.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS



Henry Arthur Laurence Ellis (Aus 412932)
Royal Australian Air Force 77 Squadron

One night in November 1943, this officer piloted an aircraft detailed to attack Leverkusen. When nearing the target the bomber came under heavy fire from the ground defences. Two of the aircraft's engines were hit and other damage was sustained. Undeterred,

Pilot Officer Ellis flew on to the target and pressed home his attack. Not long afterwards both the defective engines became useless. In spite of this, Pilot Officer Ellis flew the bomber to base. He displayed superb skill, great courage and resolution

Flying Officer William Ernest Gifford HUMPHREY (127889), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 105 Squadron.

This officer has completed many sorties and has displayed commendable courage and determination. One night in November, 1943, he piloted an aircraft detailed to attack a target in the Ruhr. Whilst over the target area the aircraft was subjected to heavy anti-aircraft fire. A shell burst close under the nose of the bomber and caused damage to the controls. Flying Officer Humphrey was injured in the foot by a fragment of shrapnel which cut away the toe of his flying boot. Nevertheless, he pressed home his attack with vigour, afterwards flying the damaged bomber to an airfield in this country. This officer displayed a high degree of skill and resolution throughout.

Pilot Officer Henry Arthur Laurence ELLIS (Aus.412932), Royal Australian Air Force, No. 77 Squadron.

One night in November, 1943, this officer piloted an aircraft detailed to attack Leverkusen. When nearing the target the bomber came under heavy fire from the ground defences. Two of the aircraft's engines were hit and other damage was sustained. Undeterred, Pilot Officer Ellis flew on to the target and pressed home his attack. Not long afterwards both the defective engines became useless. In spite of this, Pilot Officer Ellis flew the bomber to base. He displayed superb skill, great courage and resolution.

Pilot Officer Harold Wallace MITCHELL (Can./J.18923), Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 429 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.

One night in November, 1943, this officer piloted an aircraft which attacked Stuttgart. When more than 100 miles from the target one of the bomber's engines became unserviceable. Pilot Officer Mitchell continued to the target, however, and despite heavy fire from the ground defences, pressed home his attack, afterwards flying the aircraft safely to base. He displayed great skill, determination and devotion to duty.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

Aus.414342 Flight Sergeant William Walter DODSWORTH, Royal Australian Air Force, No. 199 Squadron.

One night in November, 1943, this airman was the pilot of an aircraft detailed to attack Leverkusen. In the bombing run the aircraft was hit by shrapnel. The gun turrets and the inter-communication system were rendered unserviceable and a fire started. In spite of this, Flight Sergeant Dodsworth coolly continued his run and successfully attacked the target whilst other members of the crew dealt with the fire which they succeeded in extinguishing. In harassing circumstances, Flight Sergeant Dodsworth displayed skill, coolness and resolution of a high order.

Aus.425680 Flight Sergeant Roy Alexander LEARMONTH, Royal Australian Air Force, No. 619 Squadron.

This airman was the rear gunner of an aircraft which attacked Berlin one night in November, 1943. During the operation the bomber was attacked by two enemy aircraft. In the ensuing fight, Flight Sergeant Learmonth displayed great skill, giving his captain clear and concise evading directions whilst using his guns to good effect. Following his accurate burst of fire, one of the enemy aircraft caught fire and dived steeply and the other one terminated the engagement. By his resolute work, Flight Sergeant Learmonth contributed materially to the success of the operation. He has participated in many sorties and his keenness and vigilance have always been evident.

Air Ministry, 17th December 1943.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following award:—

Military Medal

539610 Acting Flight Sergeant Charles Louis SCHOFIELD, Royal Air Force, No. 74 Squadron.

On the 6th October, this airman was detailed to man an Italian Breda gun at Simi. He remained on the site for seven days sharing the duties with another airman. The gun was in a key position and was attacked incessantly by Stukas, but Flight Sergeant Schofield remained at his post and fired

his gun even when the flash eliminator was burnt off and the sights had fallen off owing to the heat of the gun. This airman probably destroyed one of the enemy aircraft although he had been wounded in the arm. On the first day of the invasion of Simi some Germans were detected below the position of the gun. Flight Sergeant Schofield participated in an attack against them and brought back one of the enemy's wounded.

AMENDMENTS.

In notification of 19th October 1943 (p. 4618, col. 2), for Acting Warrant Officer (now Pilot Officer) Raymond Frank DENTON (1390294) read Acting Warrant Officer Raymond Frank DENTON (1390284).

In notification of 24th September, 1943 (p. 4248, col. 2), awards of allied decorations. In heading preceding name of Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen Alexander Melville, O.B.E., South African Air Force, for "Commander" read "Officer."

Air Ministry, 17th December, 1943.

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

GENERAL DUTIES BRANCH.

Promotion.

Air Cdres. (temp.) granted the rank of Air Cdres. (war subs.):—

J. W. JONES, C.B. 10th Nov. 1943.

T. A. LANGFORD-SAINSBURY, O.B.E., D.F.C., A.F.C. 16th Nov. 1943.

Gp. Capt. (temp.) granted the rank of Gp. Capt. (war subs.):—

3rd Nov. 1943.

A. M. WRAY, D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C., A.F.C.

T. N. McEVoy, O.B.E.

J. SILVESTER, C.B.E. 10th Nov. 1943.

The undermid. are granted the rank of Wg. Cdr. (war subs.):—

Wg. Cdres. (temp.):—

A. V. BAX, A.F.M. (05189). 29th Oct. 1943.

H. E. BUFTON, D.F.C., A.F.C. (33223). 1st Nov. 1943.

S. W. B. MENAUL, D.F.C., A.F.C. (33272). 7th Nov. 1943.

10th Nov. 1943.

A. E. TAYLOR (22030).

C. S. MOORE (26185).

S. G. BIRCH (34120). 12th Nov. 1943.

17th Nov. 1943.

G. C. TOMLINSON, O.B.E., D.F.C. (05214).

L. C. SLEE, D.S.O., D.F.C. (32021).

G. J. GRINDLE, D.F.C., A.F.C. (32226).

H. P. BROAD, D.F.C. (26174). 20th Nov. 1943.

Sqn. Ldr. T. M. HORGAN, D.S.O., D.F.C. (40114). 4th Nov. 1943.

Flt. Offs. to be Flt. Lts. (war subs.):—

J. ARCHER, A.F.C. (46394). 16th Aug. 1943.

B. WOOD (46175). 17th Aug. 1943.

C. E. FOOKS (47502). 9th Dec. 1943.

10th Dec. 1943.

P. S. BLOMFIELD (47767).

A. R. SHERWOOD (47574). (Seny. 1st May 1943.)

11th Dec. 1943.

G. A. CRAIG, D.F.M. (47605).

J. P. HAYES, D.F.M. (47610).

W. T. KEATES (47526).

W. R. CHALK, D.F.C. (47910). 12th Dec. 1943.

R. F. MASON (47675). 13th Dec. 1943.

15th Dec. 1943.

J. F. JOHNSTONE (47779).

R. N. LOWN (47877).

A. E. MAKINS (47579).

C. SHAW, D.F.C. (47515).

Plt. Off. to be Flt. Off. (war subs.):—

J. P. BEALE (31257). 15th July 1943.

Plt. Offs. (prob.) to be Flt. Offs. (prob.) (war subs.):—

E. L. ROBERTS (52758). 29th July 1943.

S. R. OLDRIDGE, D.F.M. (52769). 2nd Sept. 1943.

R. K. HEWITT (52750). 12th Sept. 1943.

S. T. MARSHALL (52802). 26th Oct. 1943.

L. J. GORNALL (52164). 10th Nov. 1943.

R. H. FROST (52693). 12th Nov. 1943.

F. H. SABAN (52768). 20th Nov. 1943.

A. D. HOWE, D.F.M. (52752). 25th Nov. 1943.

A. R. HOWELL (52542). 28th Nov. 1943.

DONALD FLETCHER

412942



Pilot Officer Donald Fletcher born at St Leonards in Sydney in January 1917 the son of Angus and Ella Fletcher of "Bandaloo", a property out of Manilla in New South Wales.

Donald was a farmer and enlisted in the Reserve at 2a Mobile Recruiting Unit in his home town Manilla on 24 November 1940, he re-enlisted for active service in the Air Force on 15 August 1941 and was immediately sent to 1 ITS at Somers on Western Port Bay, Victoria. Donald joined No 26 Air Gunners course from 16 November 1942 to 9 December 1942 gaining his Air Gunners Badge. He gained his Flying Badge on 10 December 1942.

He embarked from Melbourne on 15 January 1943 for the United Kingdom disembarking there on 17 March 1943.

19 OTU in United Kingdom 7 April 1943 then onto 1652 Conversion Unit before joining 77 Squadron RAF on 25 July 1943. Donald was promoted to Pilot Officer on 22 October and had flown Battle, Whitley and Halifax planes

Pilot Officer Donald Fletcher was listed as missing in action on 20 February 1944.

Halifax LL 143 took off at 2331 hours from RAF Station Elvington, on an operation sortie on the night of 19/20 February 1944, the target Leipzig. The aircraft did not return and nothing further was heard of aircraft or crew who were on their 30th operation.

CREW:

RAAF	Flight Lieutenant H A L Ellis - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant J N Schofield - Flight Engineer
RAF	Pilot Officer P H J Mackie - Navigator
RAF	Pilot Officer R D Sullivan - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant H F Payne - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Pilot Officer C W G Graham - Air Gunner
RAAF	Pilot Officer D Fletcher - Air Gunner

Both aircraft and crew were lost without trace and the crew have no known grave. They are remembered on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, Surrey and Pilot Officer Fletcher is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial.

KEVIN FRANCIS GALVIN

418382



Flight Sergeant Kevin Galvin was the son of John Michael and Grace Galvin of Thornbury, Victoria he was born May 1923 in Unley Park, South Australia. He attended St Thomas' College before moving to St Kevins' College, Coron Road, Toorak.

Kevin enlisted on 22 May 1942 at No 1 Recruiting Centre, Melbourne, he obtained his Wireless Operators Badge on 3 March 1942 followed by a Gunners Badge in April the following year. He left Brisbane for the UK four weeks later arriving there on 7 July.

Kevin was promoted to Flight Sergeant on 4 March 1944 whilst at 20 OTU and joined 77 Squadron on 23/24 May 1944 .

Barely two weeks later on the night of 8 June 1944 Halifax MZ701 took off from RAF Full Sutton at 0207 hours detailed to carry out a night flying training exercise. Almost immediately the plane crashed due to engine failure and loss of control. All the crew were killed.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer G L Hyde – Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H Fox - Flight Engineer
RAF	Sergeant E F Chapman - Navigator
RAF	Sergeant D J Hutchison - Air Bomber
RAAF	Flight Sergeant K F Galvin - Wireless Operator Air
RAAF	Flight Sergeant J D Krone - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant A Jordan - Rear Gunner

Six of the crew are buried in the Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery, Yorkshire. Sergeant Fox is buried in the Huddersfield (Lockwood) Cemetery. Flight Sergeant Galvin is buried Section B, Row E. Grave 17 of the Harrogate Cemetery.

Flight Sergeant Galvin is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Roll of Honour, Melbourne, Victoria.



Flight Sergeant Kevin Galvin

Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery

NICHOLAS CHARLES GROB

425154

Flight Sergeant Grob was born November 1919 at Rockhampton, Queensland, the son of Edward and Maria Grob of Yeppoon, Queensland. Nicholas was a farmer before signing up. (*RAAF records not digitized*)

Halifax LL122 took off from RAF Elvington on 9 December 1943 detailed to carry out a non-operational day fighter affiliation training exercise, it spun in and crashed near York. Five of the crew were killed and Flight Sergeant Simpson and Sergeant Clark were injured.

THE CREW:

RCAF	Pilot Officer J K Forest - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant L R Mace - Flight Engineer
RAF	Pilot Officer G O Sharpe - Navigator
RNZAF	Flight Sergeant R R J Simpson - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant J S Clark - Wireless Air Gunner
RCAF	Flight Sergeant E F J Hemming - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant N C Grob - Rear Gunner

Flight Sergeant Grob is buried in Grave 15, Row F, Section C of the Harrogate Cemetery and is also remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Roll of Honour Wowan, Queensland.

ROLL OF HONOUR

GROB – On 9th December 1943, in England, as a result of aircraft accident Flight Sergeant Nicholas Charles Grob, beloved son of Mr and Mrs E Grob, Pheasant Creek, Wowan

Central Queensland Herald



Flight Sergeant Nicholas Grob

*Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery
Yorkshire. UK*

ROBERT MEAD HOLLINGWORTH

414564

Flight Sergeant Robert Hollingworth was the son of William and Maude Hollingworth of Bowen Hills, Queensland. A bank clerk before enlisting he was born in May 1923. (*RAAF records not digitized*)

Halifax DT730 left RAF Elvington just before midnight on the night of 3/4 December 1943 to bomb Leipzig in Germany. Robert Hollingworth was the only Australian on board and he was attached from 1663 Conversion Unit.

CREW:

RAF	Pilot Officer R J Caseley - Pilot
RAAF	Flight Sergeant R M Hollingworth - 2 nd Pilot
RAF	Sergeant F E Ryder - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flight Sergeant C R Boyd - Navigator
RAF	Flight Sergeant W J H Webb - Air Bomber
RAF	Pilot Officer J Miller - Wireless Air Gunner
RCAF	Warrant Officer W R Farrell - Mid Upper Gunner

RCAF

Flight Sergeant K R Lees - Rear Gunner

A Missing Research and Enquiry team report in 1946 *"the aircraft crashed on the night of 3 December 1943 near Cloppenburg, seven of the crew were killed and Flight Sergeant Lees became a POW"*. All those killed are buried in the Becklingen War Cemetery, Germany.

Flight Sergeant Lees later reported: *"the aircraft exploded unexpectedly in mid air. It was shot down between Oldenburg and Cloppenburg near Bremen. As far as I know none of the others baled out before the explosion, and the Germans told me that all the others were killed"*.

Robert is buried in the Becklingen War Cemetery Collective Grave 9, E 1-3.

Robert's brother, Sergeant Pilot Alexander Hollingworth, 102 Squadron RAF, was killed in action during an operational flight over Cherbourg 6 January 1942 and is buried in the Doncaster (Rosehill) Cemetery in Yorkshire, England.

Flight Sergeant Hollingworth is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Roll of Honour Brisbane.



*Flight Sergeant
Robert Mead Hollingworth
(TWGPP – CWGC)*



*Becklingen War Cemetery
Germany*

GORDON LESLIE HYDE

422187

Pilot Officer Gordon Hyde was the son of William and Emily Hyde of Petersham born June 1917 at Marrickville, Sydney. (RAAF records not digitized)

Halifax MZ701 took off from RAF Full Sutton at 0207 hours on the night of 8 June 1944, detailed to carry out a night flying training exercise. Almost immediately the plane crashed due to engine failure and loss of control. All the crew were killed.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer G L Hyde – Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H Fox - Flight Engineer
RAF	Sergeant E F Chapman - Navigator
RAF	Sergeant D J Hutchison - Air Bomber
RAAF	Flight Sergeant K F Galvin - Wireless Operator Air
RAAF	Flight Sergeant J D Krone - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant A Jordan - Rear Gunner

Six of the crew are buried in the Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery. Sergeant Fox is buried in the Huddersfield (Lockwood) Cemetery. Gordon is buried Grave 18, Row E, Section B of the Harrogate Cemetery.

Pilot Officer Hyde is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial



Pilot Officer Gordon Hyde



*Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery
Yorkshire. UK*

DONALD ATHERTON IRVING
402359



AWM P07985.001

Flight Lieutenant Donald Irving was the son of Ernest and Dorothy Irving of Innisfail, Queensland, he was born in Brisbane and worked as a Sugar Chemist for the CSR Company before enlisting in August 1940 and posted to 2 ITS then onto 6EFTS 19 September 1940.

Donald left from Sydney for Canada 27 November 1940 for service overseas arriving Vancouver 23 December 1940 where he received his wings at No 3 SFTS, Calgary 10 April 1941. He had received his Pilot Officer's Commission on 9 April. Then it was onto the United Kingdom arriving on 25 April 1941, he joined 77 Squadron RAF on 28 July and was appointed Flight Lieutenant 25 January the following year.

While serving with the RAF in the United Kingdom he took part in eighteen operational flights over Europe. Flight Lieutenant Irving and crew took off from RAF Station Leeming in Yorkshire and following an operation against German cruisers at Wilhelmshaven on the night of 27 February 1942 they were reported missing. An investigation by the Air Ministry found that the aircraft Whitley Z6943, piloted by Irving was reported to have been hit by anti-aircraft fire near Wilhelmshaven. No trace of the aircraft or crew were found.

CREW:

RAAF	Flight Lieutenant D A Irving - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H W Blackmore - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant J L S Price - Observer
RAF	Sergeant D Unsworth - Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
RAF	Sergeant P W L Strachan - Air Gunner

In 1948 it was reported that after extensive searches and interrogation of German authorities in the area of Wilhelmshaven to Emden no trace of wreckage or crew could be found. The crew were recorded as lost at sea.

Donald is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede.

ALLAN WILSON JOHNSON

400118

Flight Sergeant Allan Wilson Johnson was born 3 May 1910 in Terang, Victoria the son of James and Normana Johnson. Lake View of Derrinallum, Victoria. Allan was a Presbyterian Minister. He enlisted at Melbourne on 27 May 1940. (*RAAF records not digitized*)

He died on 24 April 1942 when Whitley VZ9363 crashed at 01.11 hrs at Grevenkrug near Bordesholm, Germany. VZ9363 had taken off from Leeming to join 160 other aircraft to bomb the port city of Rostok. Also on board the ill-fated plane were Sergeant B. Whitham RAF, Sergeant A Whitacker RAF and Sergeant R Wilde RAF.

Originally buried in a communal grave at Bordesholm the crew were reinterred and individually buried at Hamburg Cemetery at Ohlsdorf after wars end.

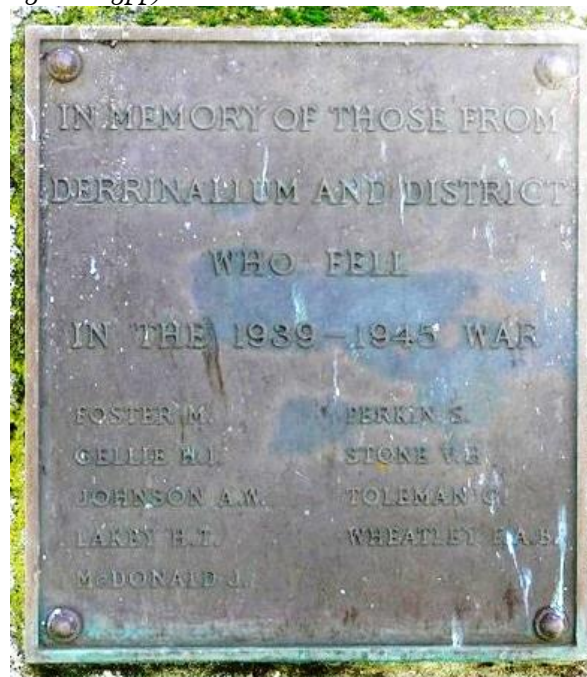
Allan is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Derrinallum War Memorial – plaque shown below.



*Flight Sergeant
Allan Wilson Johnson
(cwgc – twgpp)*



Hamburg Cemetery



Derrinallum War Memorial Photo – Graeme Saunders

AIDAN JORDAN
429663



Flight Sergeant Aidan Jordon was born at Washington, Co Durham, England on 5 September 1924 the son of William and Annie Jordon who later immigrated to Western Australia. Before enlistment on 16 October 1942 at No 4 Recruiting Centre in Perth, Aidan was attending the School of Mines and

working as an Assistant Assayer for Paringa Mining and Exploration Company (gold mining). Always interested in the Air Force he was an Air Cadet whilst attending Christian Bros College at Kalgoorlie.

Aidan gained his Air Gunners badge on 22 July 1943 and was promoted to Sergeant the same day. Before being posted overseas Aidan had completed various courses in Australia, including 1 WAGS (Wireless) at Ballarat and 3 B&GS (Bombing & Gunnery School) at West Sale and courses at Ascot Vale and Subiaco. He left Melbourne on 27 September 1943 arriving UK 9 November. After three postings Aidan arrived at 77 Squadron on 23 May 1944. He had been promoted to Flight Sergeant 22 January 1944.

Halifax MZ701 took off from RAF Full Sutton at 0207 hours on the night of 8 June 1944, detailed to carry out a night flying training exercise. Almost immediately the plane crashed due to engine failure and loss of control. All the crew were killed.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer G L Hyde – Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H Fox - Flight Engineer
RAF	Sergeant E F Chapman - Navigator
RAF	Sergeant D J Hutchison - Air Bomber
RAAF	Flight Sergeant K F Galvin - Wireless Operator Air
RAAF	Flight Sergeant J D Krone - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant A Jordan - Rear Gunner <i>(FltSgt Jordan, at 18, was one of the youngest Australians to be killed on Bomber Command duties)</i>

Six of the crew are buried in the Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery. Aidan Jordan Sec B. Row E. Grave 16. Sergeant Fox is buried in the Huddersfield (Lockwood) Cemetery.

Aidan's Funeral took place at the Royal Air Force Regional Cemetery Harrogate, Yorkshire on the 13 June 1944 at 10am, the service being conducted by a Roman Catholic Chaplain. Service honours were accorded, the coffin was covered with the Union Jack and the Last Post was sounded. Representatives from the Squadron were Squadron Leader A D Webb DFC, Flight Lieutenant S E Wodehouse and Flying Officer J S Nott.

Aidan is remembered at the Australian War Memorial and the War Memorial at Boulder, Western Australia on the east facing side.



*War Memorial
Boulder Western Australia*



Flight Sergeant Aiden Jordan

JOHN DUNCAN KRONE

432211

John was the son of Stanley and Isabel Krone of Herne Bay, New South Wales and born at Peakhurst on 28 July 1924. He was working as a clerk at the time of enlisted 5 December 1942, embarked from Sydney on 27 September 1943 for overseas. John was appointed Flight Sergeant on 16 March 1944.

John's brother, Warrant Officer Henry Krone 413674, lost his life whilst engaged on a bombing attack on Stuttgart on 15 March 1944. He was with 360 Squadron RAAF, attached to RAF Binbrook, Lincoln, and is commemorated at Runnymede.

Halifax MZ701 took off from RAF Full Sutton at 0207 hours on the night of 8 June 1944, detailed to carry out a night flying training exercise. Almost immediately the plane crashed due to engine failure and loss of control. All the crew were killed.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer G L Hyde – Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H Fox - Flight Engineer

RAF	Sergeant E F Chapman - Navigator
RAF	Sergeant D J Hutchison - Air Bomber
RAAF	Flight Sergeant K F Galvin - Wireless Operator Air
RAAF	Flight Sergeant J D Krone - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant A Jordan - Rear Gunner

After the crash John, who was severely injured was taken to the York Military Hospital but succumbed to his wounds shortly after. His funeral was held at 10 am on 13 June 1944 at the Royal Air Force Regional Cemetery Harrogate Yorkshire along with five other members of the crew.

Six of the crew are buried in the Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery, John Krone - Sec B. Row E. Grave 15. Sergeant Fox is buried in the Huddersfield (Lockwood) Cemetery.

Flight Sergeant Krone and his brother are remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Hurstville, Sydney, NSW Roll of Honour.



*Flight Sergeant
John Duncan Krone*

*Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery
Yorkshire. UK*

KRONE, June 8, Sgt John Duncan Krone RAAF 432211, dearly beloved son of the late Stanley Cyril Krone and Mrs Isabel Krone of the Myrtles, Peakhurst and beloved brother of Norman, Isabel, Donald, Mary and Peter. Missing in RAAF overseas aged 19 years.

KRONE, June 8, killed in air crash in England, Sgt John Duncan Krone RAAF beloved nephew and cousin of Mr and Mrs G.R. Farrand and Mary and David, of Mullumbimby, NSW aged 19 years.

KRONE, June 8 Sgt John Duncan Krone, RAAF beloved nephew of Mr and Mrs Ernest McKinnon, of Algerley, Brisbane and cousin of Ernest, Eileen and Rita.

KRONE, June 8 killed in air crash in England Sgt John Duncan Krone RAAF beloved nephew and cousin of Mr and Mrs Lamond and family of Carrarong, New South Wales

STUART WALTER MACKAY

414809

STUART WALTER MACKAY

414809



Stuart Mackay was born in May 1923 the son of Ronald and Jean Mackay of Norman Park, Brisbane. Worked as an apprentice compositor for Biggs & Company, Printers when he enlisted on 9 November 1941. After flying training at SEFTS, Narromine, Stuart embarked at Melbourne for Canada on 7 September 1942 arriving there a month later. He was appointed Pilot Officer. Ten months intensive training followed before he left Canada for the United Kingdom arriving there 1 September 1943, going firstly to RAF Station Skaeabrae and Air Sea Rescue Flight before joining 77 Squadron. Stuart was appointed Pilot Officer 25 June 1943 and Flying Officer 25 December 1943.

Stuart embarked at Melbourne on 24 August 1942 headed for Canada and the Empire Training Scheme arriving there 2 October. Twelve months training followed before he left Canada 26 August 1943 arriving in England 1 September going firstly to RAF Station Skaeabrae and Air Sea Rescue Flight before joining 77 Squadron. He had served with the RCAF from September 1942 to August 1943 and the RAF August 43 to June 44.

Stuart had only been with 77 Squadron at Full Sutton for a short time before he was reported missing.

Halifax NA545 took off from RAF Full Sutton at 2315 hours on the night of 16/17 June 1944 detailed to bomb Sterkrade, Germany. Nothing was heard from the aircraft after take off and it failed to return to base. NA545 was one of seven aircraft from the Squadron that failed to return from the mission.

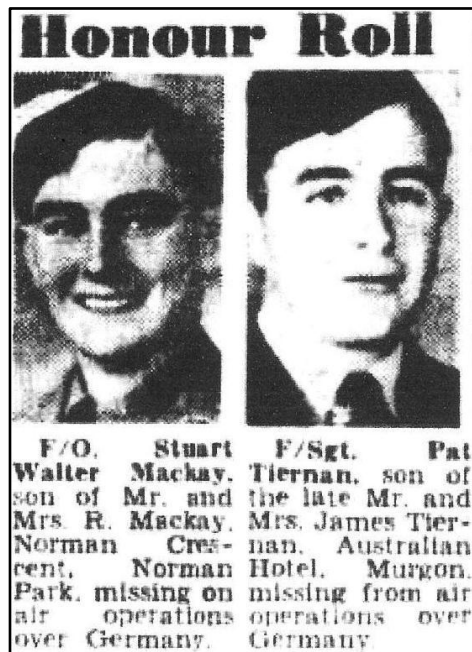
CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer H W Bird - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant R A Castle-Hall - Flight Engineer
RAF	Sergeant A B Freemantle - Navigator
RAAF	Flying Officer S W Mackay - Air Bomber
RAAF	Flight Sergeant R J Warren - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Flight Sergeant F A Meeghan - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant J A Lauder - Rear Gunner

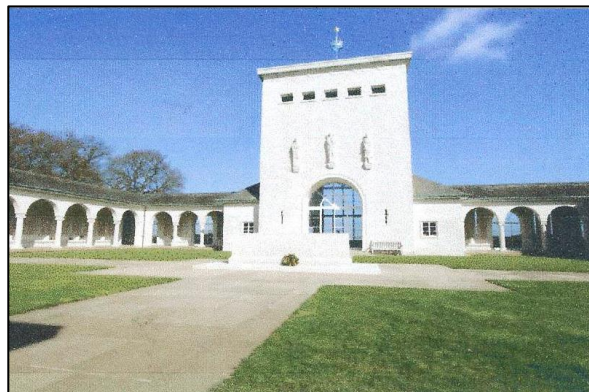
It was later established that the aircraft crashed in the sea off the coast of Holland, and all the crew were killed. Pilot Officer Bird and Sergeant Castle-Hall are buried in the Terschelling General Cemetery. Sergeant Freemantle is buried in the Sage War Cemetery, Oldenburg, Niedersachsen, Germany. Flight Sergeant Warren is buried in the Texel Cemetery Noord-Holland. Sergeant Lauder is buried in the Vlieland General Cemetery, Friesland. Flying Officer Mackay and Flt Sergeant Meeghan were lost at sea and have no known graves.

Stuart MacKay is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, Surrey. UK.

In August 1945 after returning to Australia, Flying Officer C.B. Quartermain, who knew Stuart in Canada and Great Britain, sought out his mother so that he could return Stuart's watch to her.



The Courier Mail, Brisbane. Saturday 12 August, 1944



*Memorial to the Missing
 Runnymede, Surrey UK*

JOHN MARTIN MANTELL

402826

Son of Alfred and Sarah Mantell of Grafton, New South Wales John was educated at St Mary's School, Grafton and conducting a hairdressing saloon at Maclean when he enlisted in the RAAF. He received practically all his training in Canada before going onto England where he joined a night bomber crew, transferring in May this year to the Coastal Command. (*RAAF records not digitized*)

Mrs Mantell's last message from her son was a cable in July saying he was enjoying leave in London. His elder brother is also in the RAAF. Daily Examiner, Thursday 20 August 1942

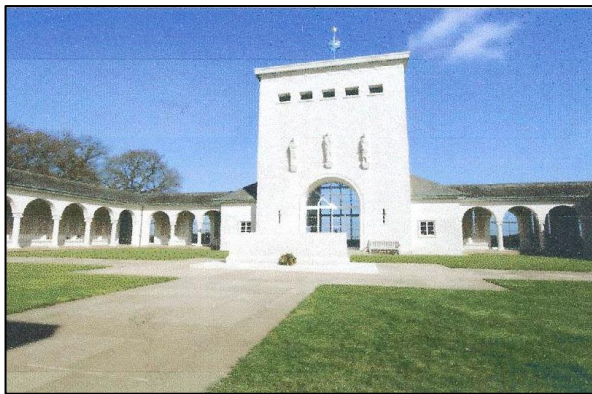
Whitley Z9461 took off from RAF Chivenor, Barnstaple, North Devon, on 13 August 1942 to carry out an anti-submarine patrol and an aircraft search. At 1917 a message was received from the plane stating it was being attacked by 3 Arado Enemy aircraft in position 48 degrees north, 7 degrees west, approximately 100 miles west of Brest, France in the Atlantic Ocean. Crews in a dinghy, over which the Whitley was flying at the time of the attack and were later rescued, reported seeing an explosion in the distance. Nothing further was heard from Z9461 and it did not return to base.

CREW:

RAF	Flight Lieutenant I Ralston - Pilot
RCAF	Pilot Officer C E Smith
RAF	Flight Sergeant R G Martin
RAAF	Flight Sergeant J M Mantell - Wireless Operator Air Gunner
RAF	Pilot Officer G Dawkins
RAF	Sergeant S T White

In 1950 it was recorded that the missing crew had lost their lives at sea.

John Mantell is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial, the Grafton War Memorial, NSW and the Memorial to the Missing at Runnymede, Surrey.



*Memorial to the Missing
Runnymede, Surrey UK*

Grafton War Memorial NSW



With the thermometer a mere 12 degrees below freezing these North Coast men of the RAAF in training in Canada found it much warmer than a few weeks before, when the mercury went below zero, but they still needed their top coats. They are (back row, left to right) F G Jackson (Lismore), J. Mantell (Grafton) H. Harrison (Lismore) B. Yaeger (Coraki)

Front Row: H. Hamlyn Harris (Murwillumbah), K Smith Casino.
Northern Star, Tuesday 10 June 1941

FRANCIS EDWIN MATHERS
413221



AWM SUK10985

The son of Francis and Eunice Mathers of Pagewood, New South Wales. RAAF records not digitized

Francis Mathers was posted to 77 Squadron RAF in May 1943. On 22 June 1943 Flight Sergeant Mathers and his crew successfully dropped their bomb load over Mulheim but unfortunately as they turned for home they were hit by flak. *"The starboard outer engine burst into flames a few minutes*

later they were hit again and the port inner engine took fire. The fuel tanks were damaged and began to leak. The fires were extinguished but after having crossed the coast the Halifax was attacked three times by a Me110" (Ref: 77 Squadron RAF). The Messerschmitt was shot down by the rear gunner Sergeant William Spedie. The aircraft suffered further damage when it made a wheels-up landing at Marlesham Heath. For his devotion to duty on this operation Flight Sergeant Mather was immediately awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (CGM) the only one to a member of 77 Squadron and soon after was commissioned as a Pilot Officer. Promulgated London Gazette 16 July 1943

Pilot Officer Mathers and his crew were shot down and all killed on a raid on Mannheim, Germany, on 6 September 1943. Halifax JB839 had taken off from Elvington.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer F E Mathers CGM - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant K A A Adams - 2 Pilot
RAF	Sergeant R Gough - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flying Officer W R Simpson - Navigator
RAF	Flight Sergeant W Goldsbrough - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant E G O French, DFM - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Sergeant G A Muffet - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Flight Sergeant W F Spedie, DFM - Rear Gunner

A 1946 report by a Missing Research & Enquiry team stated "a local priest reported that an aircraft was seen at approximately 1 am approaching from the direction of Bruchsal flying at a very low altitude. It crashed in swampy ground between the villages of Rheinjhasen and Oberhausen, Germany". All the crew are buried in the Durnbach War Cemetery, Germany. Pilot Officer Mathers is buried in 6.D.21.

Flight Sergeant Francis Mathers is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Roll of Honour in Sydney.

**FLEW WRECK
HOME**

**Australian Pilot
Decorated**

MELBOURNE, Sunday.—
Flight-Sergeant Francis Edwin Mathers, 21, of Pagewood, pilot, has been awarded a Conspicuous Gallantry Medal and two R.A.F. air gunners D.F.Ms. for their part in getting back to its base a badly damaged R.A.F. bomber and for having shot down an enemy fighter which attacked them.

Mathers is the third Australian to win the C.G.M.. His bomber was attacking an enemy target when heavily engaged by ground defences and repeatedly hit. Two engines were rendered unserviceable and the starboard alleron control shot away. Three petrol tanks which were pierced leaked rapidly. On the return flight the bomber gradually lost height and all movable equipment, including guns and ammunition was jettisoned.

Shortly after having crossed the enemy coast the bomber was intercepted by an enemy fighter. The fighter was shot into the sea.

**CGM TO RAAF
MAN**

A VICTORIAN airman serving in the RAF in England has been awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal.

He is Flt.-Sgt. Francis Edwin Mathers, 21, pilot, of Pagewood (Vic.), and is the third Australian to win the CGM.

His bomber was attacking an enemy target, when it was heavily engaged by ground defences and repeatedly hit.

Two engines were rendered unserviceable and the starboard alleron control was shot away.

Three petrol tanks which were pierced, leaked rapidly. On the homeward flight, the bomber gradually lost height and all movable equipment including guns and ammunition were jettisoned.

According to official reports, Mathers displayed superb airmanship to reach an airfield near the English coast where he made a successful crash-landing.

Two RAF air gunners were awarded DFM's for their part in bringing the bomber home.

Sydney Morning Herald
Monday 19 July 1943

Army News
Wednesday 21 July 1943



Pilot Officer
Francis Edwin Mathers



Durnbach War Cemetery, Germany

CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY MEDAL (FLYING)



Francis Edwin Mathers (413221)
Royal Australian Air Force 77 Squadron RAF

One night in June, 1943, Sergeants French and Spedie were the wireless operator/air gunner and rear gunner respectively of an aircraft piloted by Flight Sergeant Mathers, which attacked Mulheim. Whilst over the target area, the bomber

was subjected to heavy fire from the ground defences and was repeatedly hit. Two engines were rendered unserviceable in quick succession. While the starboard aileron control was shot away and 3 petrol tanks were pierced, all of which leaked rapidly. In spite of this, Flight Sergeant Mathers flew clear of the defences and set course for this country. On the return flight, the bomber gradually lost height and all movable equipment, including the guns of the mid-upper turret and some ammunition, were jettisoned. Shortly after crossing the enemy coast, the disabled aircraft was intercepted by an enemy fighter. In the ensuing engagement, Sergeant Spedie skilfully used his guns and, eventually with a devastating burst from close range, he shot the attacker down into the sea. The bomber was down to 500 feet but, displaying superb airmanship, Flight Sergeant Mathers, receiving much assistance from Sergeant French who diligently worked his wireless apparatus to obtain direction fixes, struggled on to reach an airfield near the coast. Although the undercarriage could not be lowered, this pilot successfully effected a crash-landing. In most harassing circumstances, Flight Sergeant Mathers displayed exceptional skill, courage and fortitude, while Sergeants French and Spedie displayed conduct worthy of the highest praise.

Sergeants Edward George Owen French and William Spedie were both awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal

Francis Mathers' father was presented with his CGM at Government House, Sydney on 13 April 1946 by the Governor General of Australia, Lord Gowrie.

KENNETH WILLIAM MORRISON

22395



AWM P09140.001

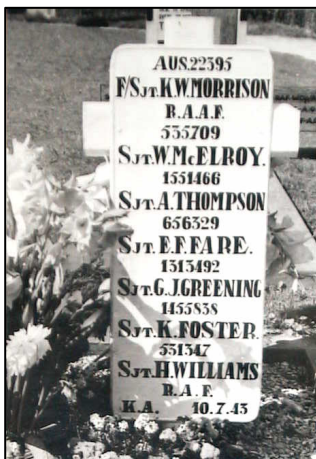
Flight Sergeant Kenneth Morrison the son of William and Bertha Morrison and was born in 1913 at Wiluna, Western Australia. He was a practising Chartered Accountant before enlisting.

Kenneth enlisted at Brisbane on 13 May 1940 which sent him on a course to being a RAAF pilot receiving his Flying Badge on 2 April 1942. Left Sydney for the United Kingdom in June. After completing more courses in England he joined 77 Squadron RAF the beginning of July 1943. Ken had been promoted to Flight Sergeant in October 1942.

Less than two weeks later whilst piloting Halifax JD126 over Arum, Holland on 10 July 1943 his plane crashed at Witmarsum and exploded. The remains of all the crew were buried by local inhabitants in the Wonsersdeel (Witmarsum) Protestant church yard in a communal grave. The remains were recovered after the war and in 1952 Kenneth was reinterred at the Jonkerbos War Cemetery, Netherlands Collective grave 20. Row H 1-7.

His brother, Lieutenant Leslie Morrison (QX36772), was killed in action in Papua on the Sanananda Track on 7 December 1942. He was buried on the side of the track and reinterred after the war to Port Moresby (Bomana) War Cemetery, Papua New Guinea.

Flight Sergeant Morrison is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Roll of Honour in Sydney.



*Flight Sergeant
Kenneth William Morrison*



*Lieutenant
Leslie Andrew Morrison*

MORRISON – In proud and loving memory of my dear sons, Lieut Leslie Andrew, killed in action Buna Dec 7 1942 and F.Sgt Kenneth Morrison lost in air operations over Germany 1943.

“Two Sons’ duty nobly done”

Inserted by Mum and Pop

MORRISON – In fond memory of Lieutenant Leslie Andrew killed in action Buna Dec 7, 1942 and brother Ken lost in air operations over Germany 1943.

Always remembered by the Scanlan Family

Courier Mail

Saturday 7 December 1946



*Jonkerbos War Cemetery
Netherlands*

RODERICK DE BURGH MORRISON

415435



Warrant Officer Roderick de Burgh Morrison was the son of Ulic and Gladys Morrison of East Guildford, Western Australia. A salesman working for Harris Scarfe & Sandovers of Perth before joining the RAAF, he was born at Guildford in February 1922.

Enlisted 12 October 1941 at No 4 Recruiting Centre, after training in Australia at Ballarat (WAGS) and West Sale (B&GS) and obtaining his air gunners badge on 23 July 1942 before leaving from Melbourne for the United Kingdom and arriving there in January 1943. He joined 77 Squadron RAF on 7 July 1943.

Halifax LK729 took off from RAF Elvington on the night of 28/29 January 1944 to bomb Berlin. Nothing was heard from the plane after take off. Six of the crew lost their lives and Sergeant Garner was to become a POW.

CREW:

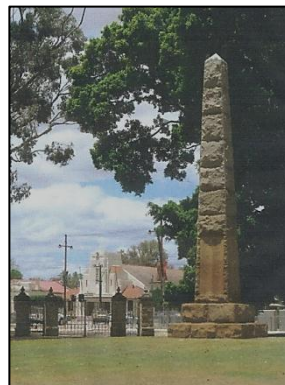
RAF	Pilot Officer J O R Webster - Pilot
RAF	Pilot Officer B J Kearley - Flight Engineer
RAF	Sergeant G C Garner - Navigator
RAF	Flight Sergeant L R Lewis - Air Bomber
RAF	Flight Sergeant J W I Robinson - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Sergeant E R Prince - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Warrant Officer R de B Morrison - Rear Gunner

Warrant Officer Morrison was buried at Fleckenzechlin Ostprignitz, Germany Grave 1 Row 2. After the war many were moved from outlying cemeteries to the Berlin War Cemetery. Roderick was reinterred in Grave 9.J.6 in the Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery. Sergeant Prince is also buried in the Berlin War Cemetery – Webster, Kearley, Lewis and Robinson have no known grave.

Warrant Officer Morrison is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Guildford War Memorial, Western Australia.



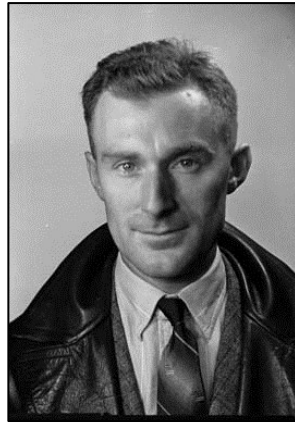
*Warrant Officer
Roderick De Burgh Morrison*



*Guildford WA
War Memorial*

NORMAN LINDSAY NEWELL

428888



Flight Sergeant Norman Newell was the son of Norman and Mavis Newell and the husband of Margaret. An Accountant before joining up he was born in March 1913 at Paddington in Sydney. Norman enlisted in Sydney on 14 October 1942. (*RAAF records not digitized*)

Halifax LW 341 left RAF Elvington on the night of 15/16 February 1944 – during a bombing raid to Berlin the plane crashed into the Baltic Sea.

CREW:

RAF	Warrant Officer A F Edmunds - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant B Coughlin - Flight Engineer
RCAF	Flying Officer R E Padget - Navigator
RAF	Flight Sergeant J J Kennedy - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant C Tyler - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant N L Newell - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Flight Sergeant R W Wheeler - Rear Gunner

The aircraft crashed in the Baltic and all crew were killed, Flight Sergeant Newell is buried in Kappel Churchyard (Row 9 Grave 8) on the Danish Island of Lolland. The other crew members have no known grave. Flight Sergeant Newell was found on 30 August having drifted ashore on Riddertofte Beach and buried on 1 September 1944 by Vicar Albert Madsen at the request of the German Wehrmacht

The churchyard contains the graves of four Commonwealth airmen, Norman Newell and Flying Officer Peter Pritchard (RAF), who died 11 June 1941, and two unidentified graves.

Flight Sergeant Newell is remembered with Honour at the Australian War memorial and the Roll of Honour at Carlton, (Kogarah) NSW.



*Flight Sergeant
Norman Lindsay Newell*



JACK STEWART NOTT

421543



Flying Officer Jack Nott was the son of Charles and Beatrice Nott and the husband of Airlie of Nimbin, NSW. Born 1918, a bricklayer by trade he had enlisted on 1 February 1942. After training in Australia he left for Canada on 2 July 1942 where he underwent a number of courses before moving to England. He commenced at 77 Squadron RAF on 9 November 1943 and had his first flight with them the next day.

Halifax MZ698 took off from RAF Full Sutton at 2320 hours on the night of 16/17 June 1944, detailed to bomb Sterkrade, Germany. MZ698 was one of seven aircraft from 77 Squadron that failed to return after the mission.

Flying Officer Nott, the only Australian on board, was the Air Bomber, the other seven crew members belonged to the RAF. The aircraft crashed at St Oedenrode (Noord-rabant), a small town north of Eindhoven and west of the main road leading to Uden, Holland. Five of the crew were killed in the crash and Flight Sergeants Needham and Bulmer became POWs.

Flying Officer Nott evaded capture and was in hiding with the Dutch underground movement. He was conveyed to a transit address in the town of Tilburg, Holland. The Germans captured a member of the underground and learnt of the presence of Nott plus two other evaders, (R E Carter RCAF & R A Walker RAF). These three were then captured and shot by the Gestapo on 9 July 1944. Flying Officer Nott and the two other airmen were shot whilst POWs in contravention of the Geneva Convention. Their bodies were taken in coffins to the Vught Concentration Camp and it was assumed they were cremated. Flying Officer Nott has no known grave and his name is commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede. He was classified as killed while a prisoner of war. NB: Coba Pusken, the owner of the home at Tilburg, was placed in Mauthausen Concentration Camp where he died. *Ref: Wingless by Tom Roberts*

The five crew members killed in the crash are buried in the Eindhoven (Woensel) General Cemetery

Flying Officer Nott was posthumously Mentioned in Despatches – Promulgated in London Gazette 13 June 1946 page 2818, in recognition of his actions in endeavouring to avoid capture by the enemy. He was survived by his wife and son Antony.

He is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede.



Through paint and canvas, Canberra artist and Gallipoli Art Award winner Margaret Hadfield (Zorgdrager) captures this sacrifice and enduring legacy. In the forefront, the graves of the Australian Lancaster crew of pilot Michael Skarratt. Flying Officer Jack Nott (right front), Flight Lieutenant Wallace Martin (right back), and Pilot Officer Lionel Gibbs (left front) offer ghostly images. Canberra Times 20 May 2014



*Memorial to the Missing
Runnymede, Surrey UK*

FRANCIS JOHN O'GRADY

411811

Flight Sergeant Francis O'Grady was the son of John and Lillian O'Grady of Sydney, NSW and was born at Rose Bay, Sydney in 1920. A Public Servant before enlisting. (*RAAF records not digitized*)

Halifax JD 152 took off from RAF Elvington at 2239 hours on the night of 27/28 May 1943, detailed to bomb Essen, Germany.

CREW:

RAAF	Flight Sergeant F J O'Grady - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant G H Garrard - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flying Officer B C McGrath - Navigator
RAF	Flight Sergeant C Clarke - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant W R Beadsmoore - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Sergeant W A Manning - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant C B Anderson - Rear Gunner

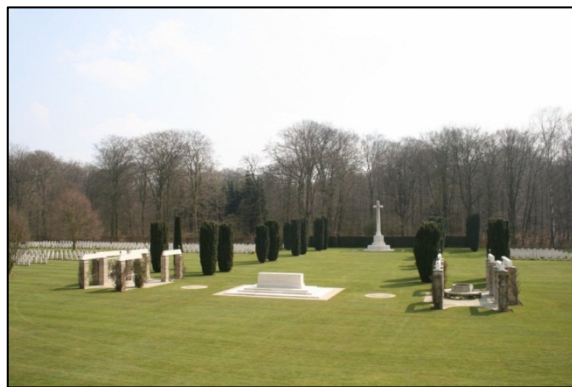
A report by a Missing Research & Enquiry team stated "the aircraft crashed in flames at Lavesum about 4 kms north of Haltern, Germany". All the crew were killed and they are buried in the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Germany.

Francis was the pilot of Halifax JB865, with the same crew except for Sergeant Beadsmoore, when, on 4 April, they were hit by flak as they were leaving the target area of Essen and sustained damage and loss of brake pressure – landed safely at Elvington.

Flight Sergeant O'Grady is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Roll of Honour, Sydney.



*Flight Sergeant
Francis John O'Grady
(cwgc)*



Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany

JOHN PATRICK O'MEARA

410370

Warrant Officer John O'Meara was the son of Michael and Susan O'Meara was born on 30 April 1909 in Melbourne, Victoria and the husband of Kathleen O'Meara. He was a school teacher by profession.

Halifax NA 508 took off from RAF Full Sutton, Yorkshire at 2315 hours on the night of 16/17 June 1944, detailed to bomb Sterkrade, Germany. Shot down at 02.16 at Amstelveen near Amsterdam.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer R A W Blair - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H L Moore - Flight Engineer
RAAF	Pilot Officer L G Pratt - Observer
RAAF	Flight Sergeant G A Armstrong - Air Bomber
RAAF	Warrant Officer J P O'Meara - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flying Officer J M Date - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant D G Tustin - Tail Gunner

A 1947 report by a Missing Research & Enquiry team stated "*the Communal Police at Neuwer-Amstel reported that the aircraft crashed in flames at Neuwer-Amstel on the night of 16/17 June, 1944. German documents confirmed that only one body was recovered that of WO O'Meara*" He is buried at the Bergen-Op-Zoom Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands in a joint grave with an unidentified comrade. 12.F.2.

Until 1990 the other six crew members had no known grave and their names are commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, Surrey. It was in June of that year that the wreckage of NA508 was uncovered by the Recovery Team of the Royal Netherlands Air Force, including the remains of five of the crew, who were buried at the Bergen op Zoom Canadian War Cemetery on 8 October 1991.

Warrant Officer O'Meara is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Roll of Honour in Melbourne



*Warrant Officer
John Patrick O'Meara*

*Back Row – Left to Right:
L Pratt, J Date, D Tustin, H Moore
Front Row left to Right:
J.O'Meara, R Blair, G Armstrong
(donor of photograph unknown)*

ROBERT JAMES PEGGS 415913



Pilot Officer Robert James (Jim) Peggs, the son of Robert and Pathama Peggs of Kalamunda, Western Australia, was born Pingelly WA in 1924. He worked as a storeman before enlisting on 24 March 1942 educated at Perth Boys School and Senior Technical College

He qualified as an air gunner in April 1943 at 3 B&G, West Sale, having also completed the Wireless Air Gunners course at Ballarat. Jim left Sydney in June 1943 arriving in England in September and was attached to 466 in December of that year. He flew his first flight in England on 8 December 1943.

Flew 7 sorties with 466 before he was posted to 77 Squadron RAF in May the following year and a month later promoted to Pilot Officer.

Jim and three other crew members were killed when their Halifax LL138 crashed after an operation bombing railway facilities at Orleans, in France, on 23 May 1944, having taken off from RAF Full Sutton. Just ten minutes after releasing their bomb load they were attacked by a night fighter damaging the controls and forcing the Halifax into an uncontrollable dive. Three of the crew managed to bale out of the stricken aircraft the remainder of the crew were killed during the initial attack.

Jim and three other crew members are buried at Seris Communal Cemetery. The other crew members (Haworth, Hale and Taylor) were taken as prisoners of war. Flight Sergeant Hale died within a few days of his injuries and is buried in the Nantes (Pont-du-Cens) Communal Cemetery. Taylor also died as a POW, and Haworth was returned to England at the end of the war.

CREW:

RAF	Warrant Officer G T Haworth - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant R A Rose - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flight Sergeant C T Hale - Navigator
RCAF	Flying Officer A A Beatty - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant R G James - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Pilot Officer R J Peggs - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant J D Taylor - Rear Gunner



*Left to Right: R.A. Rose (RAF), R.J. Peggs (RAAF),
R.G. James (RAF), A.M. Beatty (RCAF) (photo Isabelle Perrot)*



*Pilot Officer
Robert James Peggs*

LANCELOT GEORGE PRATT 425210

Pilot Officer Lancelot Pratt was the son of George and Eva Pratt and the husband of Helena Pratt of Redcliffe in Queensland. *(RAAF records not digitized)*

Halifax NA 508 took off from RAF Full Sutton, Yorkshire at 2315 hours on the night of 16/17 June 1944, detailed to bomb Sterkrade, Germany.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer R A W Blair - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant H L Moore - Flight Engineer
RAAF	Pilot Officer L G Pratt - Observer
RAAF	Flight Sergeant G A Armstrong - Air Bomber
RAAF	Warrant Officer J P O'Meara - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flying Officer J M Date - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant D G Tastin - Tail Gunner

A 1947 report by a Missing Research & Enquiry team stated "*the Communal Police at Neuwer-Amstel reported that the aircraft crashed in flames at Neuwer-Amstel on the night of 16/17 June, 1944. German documents confirmed that only one body was recovered that of WO O'Meara*" He is buried at the Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery, Netherlands.

Until 1990 the other six crew members had no known grave and their names are commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, Surrey. It was in June of that year that the wreckage of NA508 was uncovered by the Recovery Team of the Royal Netherlands Air Force, including the remains of five of the crew, who were buried at the Bergen op Zoom Canadian War Cemetery on 8 October 1991.

Pilot Officer Pratt is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Memorial to the Missing at Runnymede.



Back Row – Left to Right: L Pratt, J Date, D Tustin, H Moore

Front Row left to Right: J O'Meara, R Blair, G Armstrong (donor of photograph unknown)

PRATT - In memory of my dear Husband
425210. Pilot Officer Lancelot George Pratt,
presumed to have lost his life over Germany 17
June 1944.

Inserted by his loving Wife and two children.

PRATT - In loving memory of P/O Observer
Lance Pratt, presumed to have lost his life over
Sterkrade, Germany. 17/6/44

Always remembered

Inserted by his Mother, Lewis & brothers and
sister.

Courier Mail

Monday 17 June 1946

404262

Pilot Officer John Pye the son of Albert and Lillian Pye and husband of Marcia, was born at in October 1917 at Tamworth. John was with the 41st Battalion from 1936 to 1940 until he signed up to join the RAAF on 19 July 1940 in Brisbane.

He completed pilot training in Australia, acquiring his flying badge in 13 January 1941, before being posted to England arriving there in August 1941 where he furthered his flying skills at 19 OTU before joining 77 Squadron on 5 October 1941. He was promoted to Pilot Officer on 26 February 1943.

Halifax D796 took off from RAF Elvington at 0039 hours on the night of 26/27 April 1943, detailed to bomb Duisberg, Germany.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer J D Pye - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant E J Tassell - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flying Officer R C Stewart - Navigator
RAF	Pilot Officer D W Atter - Air Bomber
RAF	Flight Sergeant G E Barfoot - Wireless Air Gunner

RAF Sergeant P Gibbs - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF Sergeant J R Wells - Rear Gunner

The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed on the Scheidstrasse at Essen-Haarzoph, Germany. Two of the crew Pilot Officer Pye and Sergeant Wells were killed in the crash and the others became POWs. Pilot Officer Pye was initially buried in the North Military Cemetery Dusseldorf but was re-interred on 2 October 1946 to the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery.

Flying Officer Stewart a POW took part in the mass escape of Air Force Officer from Sagan. He was re-captured and handed over to the Gestapo and was murdered on or about 29 March 1944. He is buried in the Poznam Old Garrison Cemetery, Poland.

Pilot Officer Pye is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Roll of Honour, Ballina, NSW.



Pilot Officer John Downing Pye

LOUIS FREDERICK SAMSON

415186

Sergeant Louis Samson was the son of Horace and May Samson of Gosnells in Western Australia. He was born in 1921 at Fremantle in Western Australia. (RAAF records not digitized – only casualty report)

Appeared on the casualty list issued from Berlin International Red Cross quoting German sources

Halifax JB847 took off from RAF Elvington at 2141 hours on the night of 8/9 April 1943, detailed to bomb Duisberg, Germany.

CREW:

RAF	Flight Lieutenant J W Balley - Pilot
RAAF	Sergeant L F Samson - 2 nd Pilot
RAF	Sergeant J W R H Woodley - Flight Engineer
RAF	Sergeant T S McStay - Navigator
RAF	Pilot Officer R Wilson - Air Bomber
RAF	Flight Sergeant P A Greene - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Sergeant R W Hedicker - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant T Crossland - Rear Gunner

The aircraft was homebound at 15,000 feet when it was shot down by a night fighter. The order to bale out was given, but only Pilot Officer Wilson succeeded in leaving the aircraft before it crashed at Moyvilliers near Estree-St-Denis in France. Wilson became a POW and the other seven crew members perished. They are buried in the Creil Communal Cemetery, France on 12 April. Sergeant Samson is buried in Plot 2, grave 350.

Sergeant Samson was a member of 1658 Conversion Unit at the time of his death on 9 April 1943.

Sergeant Samson is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Nedlands, Western Australia, roll of Honour.



Sergeant Louis Frederick Samson

EDWIN ALFRED SIMS 413676



Flight Sergeant Edwin Sims the son of Edwin and Ethel Sims born June 1914 in Sydney. (*RAAF records not digitized - only casualty reports*)

Enlisted 12 September 1941 No 2 Recruiting Centre, Sydney received his flying badge on 19 October 1942. He left Melbourne 22 May 1942 for Canada arriving 20 June, four months later four months

later he arrived in the United Kingdom and after further training and familiarization he joined 77 Squadron on 16 June 1943. Edwin had been promoted to Flight Sergeant on 9 April 1943.

Halifax JD213 took off from RAF Elvington at 2329 hours on the night of 22/23 June 1943, detailed to bomb Mulheim, Germany.

CREW:

RAAF	Flight Sergeant E A Sims - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant J Westbarn - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flight Sergeant D H R Kelly - Navigator
RAF	Sergeant T W C Luther - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant T Ogle - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Sergeant J Fitzsimmons - Mid Upper Gunner
RCAF	Sergeant O D Thompson - Rear Gunner

All the crew were killed and it was presumed they had lost their lives at sea.

Flight Sergeant Sims is buried in the Wenduine Communal Cemetery, Belgium. His body was washed ashore and he was originally buried in grave 284 marked Unknown, the body was exhumed in 1946 and identified as Edwin Sims and reinterred in Grave 10, row B.

Flight Sergeant Kelly is buried in the Bergen General Cemetery and Sergeant Ogle is buried in the Rotterdam (Crooswijk) General Cemetery. The other four crew members have no known grave and they are commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede.

Flight Sergeant Sims is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P00943.001

*Group portrait of members of Course 58 who attended the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS) at the No. 6 Service Flying Training School at Dunnville Airport between June and October 1942
Edwin Sims is 5th from left in the back row.*



*Flight Sergeant
Edwin Alfred Sims*



*Left to right - R.K. Inch, K.W. Porter, U/K
K.H. Walsh, R.E. Parrack, U/K, E.A. Sims*

BADEN HENRY STEVENS

422312

Flight Sergeant Baden Stevens was the son of Frederick and Bertha Elvira Stevens born on 25 June 1917 at Double Bay, Sydney. He married Alice Hamerton in 1939. (*RAAF records not digitized – only casualty report*)

Before the war he was in the AIF 8th Field Company

Before enlisting on 26 April 1942 Baden was a Tram Conductor working in Sydney, after training in Australia he embarked for the United Kingdom on 15 January 1943.

Halifax HR946 took off from RAF Station Elvington, near York, at 1637 hours on the 20/21 January 1944 to bomb Berlin.

CREW:

RAF	Flight Lieutenant V H Surplice, DFC - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant L Ashton - 2 nd Pilot
RAF	Sergeant A A Timson - Flight Engineer
RAF	Sergeant J L Duffy DFM - Navigator

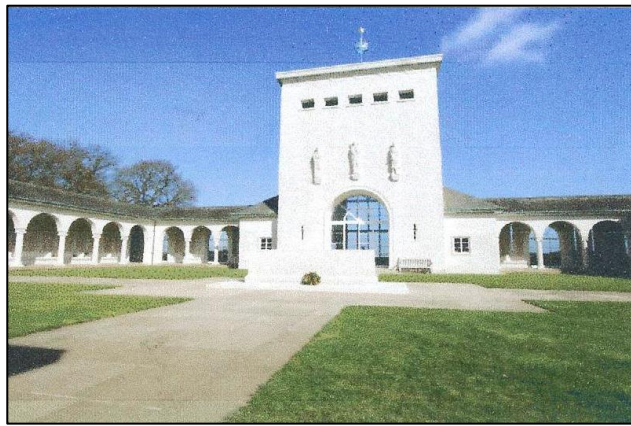
RAF	Sergeant H P Hopkins - Air Bomber
RAF	Sergeant T King DFM - Wireless Operator
RAF	Sergeant K Emeny - Air Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant B H Stevens - Rear Gunner

Captured Germany documents indicate that his plane a Halifax bomber HR946 crashed 7.30pm in Berlin Falkenberg Rieselfelder, Germany. All the crew except Sergeant Duffy, DFM, who became a prisoner of war, are recorded as missing.

Duffy when interrogated as a POW *"I last saw Flight Sergeant Stevens prior to my own departure from the aircraft. Since then I have receive no further information concerning FS Stevens."*

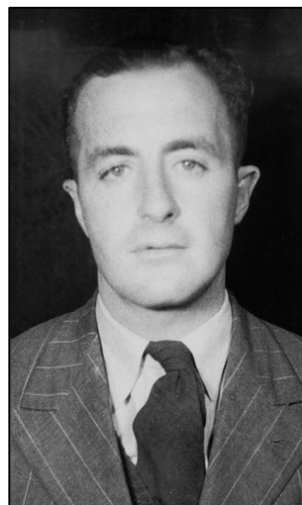
Sergeant Duffy later stated that the Germans had told him that all the remaining members of the crew lost their lives. Following post war searches and enquiries it was recorded that the seven missing members had no known grave.

Flight Sergeant Stevens is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial, the Roll of Honour in Sydney and the Memorial to the Missing at Runnymede.



*Memorial to the Missing
Runnymede, Surrey UK*

PATRICK EDWARD THOMAS TIERNAN
426711



Flight Sergeant Patrick Tiernan, the son of James and Mary Tiernan of Murgon in Queensland, was born on 23 June 1914 at Taringa via Brisbane, he attended Murgon State School and then boarded at

Nudgee College. Before enlisting Patrick worked as a law clerk whilst studying law and was previously in the Army Reserve. He joined the Air Force on 18 July 1942, did an air gunners course among other things and received his badge on 19 August 1943.

Patrick embarked from Brisbane on 10 September 1943 bound for the United Kingdom where the ship arrived on 11 October. After finishing more training in England and attachment to other squadrons, he was posted to 77 Squadron on 25 April 1944. Patrick had been promoted to Flight Sergeant on 19 February 1944.

Halifax MZ715 took off from RAF Full Sutton at 2326 hours on the night of 16/17 June 1944 detailed to bomb Sterkrade, Germany. MZ715 was one of seven aircraft from the Squadron that failed to return from the mission.

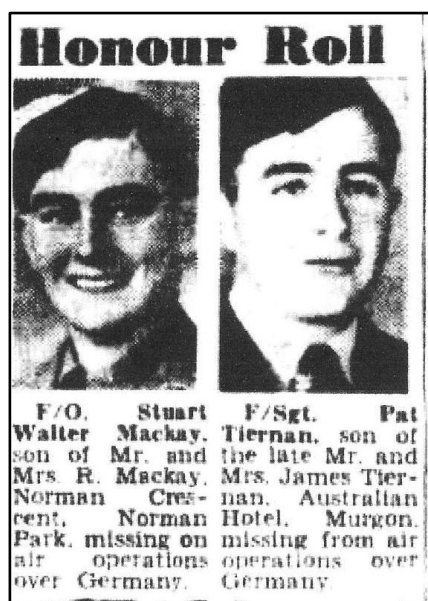
CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer A I Crain Pilot
RAF	Sergeant V Gledhill - Flight Engineer
RAF	Flying Officer T R Davies - Navigator
RAAF	Warrant Officer A A Braid - Air Bomber
RAF	Warrant Officer A J Owen - Wireless Air Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant P E T Tiernan - Mid Upper Gunner
RAAF	Flight Sergeant A J Burns - Rear Gunner

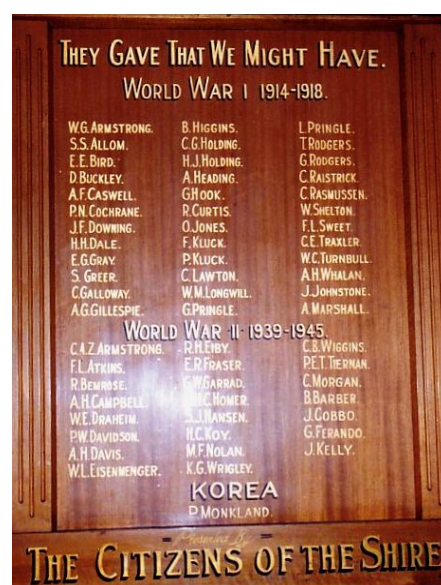
The aircraft exploded in the air throwing Warrant Officer Owen clear, he was captured and became a POW but had to spend some time in hospital recovering from his injuries. Debris was scattered between Ochten and Dodewaard, two small villages on the banks of the Waal. The six other members of the crew were killed.

Pilot Officer Crain, Sergeant Gledhill, Flying Officer Davies and Warrant Officer Braid are buried in the Uden War Cemetery. Patrick Tiernan and Flight Sergeant Alfred Burns are buried together in Comrade Grave 316 at Dodewaard General Cemetery

Flight Sergeant Tiernan is remembered with Honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Murgon Roll of Honour.



The Brisbane Courier-Mail Saturday 12 August 1944



Murgon Roll of Honour



The citizens of Dodewaard in the Netherlands have been tending the graves of Australian airmen Patrick Tiernan, from Murgon, and Alfred Burns, from Sydney since they were shot down over their town during World War II. In 2014 they conducted a Memorial Day in honour of the two airmen. Those who travelled to the Netherlands for the occasion included the Murgon school principal, Greg Smith and school captains, Geoffrey Kinsella and Kirsten Upton photographed with the memorial display mounted opposite the graves of Alfred Burns and Patrick Tiernan. southburnett.com.au

ROBERT JAMES WARREN
429838



Flight Sergeant Robert Warren the son of William and Florence Warren was born on 8 April 1916 at Yorketown in South Australia. He was married to Valerie. Before enlisting on 12 September 1942 Robert was the manager of a butter factory. (*RAAF records not digitized – only Casualty Reports*)

Robert completed various RAAF courses in Australia including the WAG course at Ballarat before leaving on 15 June 1943, having obtained his Air Gunners Badge on 27 May, for the United Kingdom. He joined 77 Squadron on 8 May 1944

Halifax NA 545 took off from RAF Full Sutton at 2315 hours on the night of 16/17 June 1944 detailed to bomb Sterkrade, Germany. NA 545 was one of seven aircraft from the Squadron that failed to return from the mission.

CREW:

RAAF	Pilot Officer H W Bird - Pilot
RAF	Sergeant R A Castle-Hall - Flight Engineer
RAF	Sergeant A B Freemantle - Navigator
RAAF	Flying Officer S W Mackay - Air Bomber
RAAF	Flight Sergeant R J Warren - Wireless Air Gunner
RAF	Flight Sergeant F A Meeghan - Mid Upper Gunner
RAF	Sergeant J A Lauder - Rear Gunner

It was later established that the aircraft crashed in the sea off the coast of Holland, and all the crew were killed. From captured German documents it was confirmed in October 1945 that Flight Sergeant Warren was washed ashore on the Island Texel and buried in the Texel (DenBurg) Cemetery on 6 July 1944.

Pilot Officer Bird and Sergeant Castle-Hall are buried in the Terschelling General Cemetery. Sergeant Freemantle is buried in the Sage War Cemetery, Oldenburg, Niedersachsen, Germany. Flight Sergeant Warren is buried in the Texel (Den Burg) Cemetery, Holland, K. 7.159 Sergeant Lauder is buried in the Vlieland General Cemetery, Friesland. Flying Officer Mackay and Flt Sergeant Meeghan have no known graves.

Flight Sergeant Warren is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and on the Honour Roll at Stansbury, South Australia



*Flight Sergeant
Robert James Warren*

Texel (Den Burg) Cemetery - Holland

JOHN LESLIE WILSON 412788



AWM P09699.001

Flight Lieutenant John Wilson was the son of Hugh and Grace Wilson born on 16 April 1917 at Ganmain in NSW. Robert married Mary O'Keefe in 1940 at Sydney and they had a son John Charles who was born in October 1941, he was working for Reckitt and Coleman, Sydney as a clerk before enlisting.

John enlisted firstly in the 2nd Armed Regiment where he stayed for 300 days before being discharged on 20 September 1940 and re-enlisting in the RAAF. In July 1941 he moved to 2ITS and then on to 8EFTS at Narrandera, then 3 SFTS at Amberley in December 1941 before being transferred to 1SFTS at Point Cook on 1 April 1942. He gained his flying badge early in 1942. He was discharged from the RAAF "on being granted a commission". Appointed Pilot Officer on 30 April 1942 and Flying Officer 30 October of the same year.

John trained on Tiger Moths, Ansons and Oxfords.

John was posted on attachment to the RAF and embarked at Sydney 16 June 1942 to disembark in the United Kingdom on 28 August. After attending additional training in England, including OTU, he was posted to 77 Squadron RAF on 4 April 1943 reporting for duty after 24 days leave.

On his last leave in the England he was admitted to hospital for three days.

John was killed on 1 September 1943 and is buried in the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery. 18.A.16. Originally buried in the City Cemetery, Datteln, Germany- Row 1. Field 36. Grave 2.

Flight Lieutenant Wilson is remembered with honour at the Australian War Memorial and the Roll of Honour in Sydney, NSW.



*Flight Lieutenant John Leslie Wilson
(twgpp-cwgc)*

WILSON, Flt Lt. John Leslie, 412788, Captain Halifax Bomber, previously reported missing believed killed, now known to have lost his life in raid over Berlin September 1, 1943 and buried in town cemetery of Detteln, Germany. Beloved husband of Mary and father of John, "Crecy" Hazelbrook. Per Ardua ad Astra.

Also: Beloved grand-son-in-law of Mr and Mrs J. J. Stevenson, *Inglewood*, Manning Road, Double Bay.

Also: Dearly loved younger son of Mr & Mrs N Charles Wilson of Cecil Road, Rose Bay and loving brother of Marjorie (Mrs J A McLeish) and Keith (AIF). Treasured memories.

Also: Beloved son-in-law of Mrs M.M. O'Keefe, Greyholme, Wallaroy Crescent, Double Bay and brother -in-law of Ina (Mrs Ben) of San Francisco

*Sydney Morning Herald
Saturday 19 May 1945*

The Last Moments of a Brave Life

JD413 was one of 14 Halifax bombers of 77 Squadron RAF that took off from Elvington, Yorkshire on the summer's evening of 31 August 1943 to join more than 600 other aircraft in a raid on Berlin. The 8 man crew had been together for several months and had taken part in many operations. RAAF Flight Lieutenant John Wilson, the 26-year-old pilot and the only Australian on board, was on his 30th sortie – the maximum any crew member flew before transfer to less hazardous actions.

The crew had first flown the brand new JD413 in a raid on the Ruhr, Germany's industrial heart, the night before. There had been heavy flak but the aircraft returned to base at dawn undamaged.

The crew arrived at the aircraft shortly before the scheduled take off time for the Berlin raid and were told the Halifax's undercarriage had been replaced. This raised no real interest at the time but was to prove a fatal flaw for the mission. The two surviving crew members later concluded that the compass had not been re-swung after the major repairs and was giving false headings. While incorrect readings might not have proved disastrous but as the aircraft crossed the Dutch coast, its port engine lost its coolant and caught fire. The fire was extinguished and the propeller feathered.

The pilot could have turned for home. He chose not to, partly because turning back into a massive stream of unlit bombers was a high risk exercise in itself, and, perhaps, partly because the crew had been forced back with mechanical problems on a previous mission, he was determined to push on to

Berlin. Flight engineer Jim Hopkins later reported that maintaining height was difficult on the three remaining engines and they eventually dropped their bombs over Berlin at 11,000 feet instead of the usual 18,000 feet. The inner pot engine also drove the aircraft's hydraulic system – for the rest of the flight the pilot wrestled with almost dead controls. Hopkins noted that on the way to the target the guiding flares, dropped by pathfinder aircraft, seemed too far to port and the course was adjusted several times.

The return route was what the crews called the Cook's Tour – flying over relative flak and fighter-free southern Germany and northern France. It was longer but safer, except for those on JD413 whose faulty compass took them much too far to the north.

Losing height, the Halifax dropped through the clouds at just 7000 feet, right over the hotly defended Ruhr. Within minutes the aircraft was lit up by searchlights and the flak guns opened up. Jim Hopkins recalls that all hell broke loose. "The petrol tanks were holed and on fire and the skipper gave the order to bail out. I got into my chute and went to the rear exit. Leicester (the navigator) heard the skipper trying to get replies from the crew and told him he was about to jump. Jack (Wilson) replied "OK, best of luck". Another member of the crew was standing evidently paralysed with fear and failed to put on his parachute and jump. Leicester couldn't get to him because the floor of the plane between them was gone.

Hopkins says he thinks the pilot was badly wounded but managed to keep the blazing aircraft under control long enough to allow three crew to jump. "Just after my chute opened there was a terrific flash – it must have been the aircraft hitting the ground."

Hopkins and Leicester, quickly rounded up, spent the rest of the war as POWs.

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT JOHN LESLIE WILSON

The following item was published in the Wagga Daily Advertiser in August this year and tells how a young RAAF bomber pilot who died more than 60 years ago could finally be awarded a posthumous Distinguished Flying Cross. Badly injured FLTLT John Wilson, originally from Ganmain, sacrificed his own life to keep a blazing Halifax bomber flying level long enough for some of his crew to parachute to safety. Remarkably, his son has only just learned of the tragic events that unfolded over Germany's Ruhr Valley in 1943.

RAAF FLTLT John Leslie Wilson was 26 when his Halifax bomber JD413 of Yorkshire based 77 Squadron RAF was brought down by flak over the Ruhr Valley town of Datteln while returning from a raid on Berlin.

He and four of his crew were trapped inside the wreckage while three others parachuted to safety. One badly burned crew member died three days later while the other two survivors became Prisoners of War.

Manning the 88mm flak gun which brought down JD413 in the early hours of 1 September 1943, were three 16 year old members of the local Hitler Youth Brigade. One, Hugo Bresser, later became a Roman Catholic Priest.

Immediately after the downing, details were slim, FLTLT Wilson's young widow Mary was advised that her husband was missing in action. It was to be almost two years before his death was confirmed.

The flight engineer, Jim Hopkins, just 19 but already an RAF FLTSGT, wrote to her to explain what had happened on the ill-fated mission, but where the aircraft had crashed was apparently unknown to the RAF. Even FLTSGT Hopkins was unaware that his skipper had a son. As he pointed out later, the pilot was an officer and most of the other crew members held other ranks and they lived in separate barracks and only talked to one another during training and missions and that talk was nearly always technical.

But the Datteln locals knew the aircraft's fate – it had nose-dived into the soft ground not far from the centre of town and buried itself. The tip of one wing, all that appeared above the ground was quickly taken for the aluminium black market. The crater filled with water and JD413 was all but forgotten. In 1961 the Datteln council decided to build a swimming pool on the disused site right beside one of the town's main ring roads. Contractors preparing the foundations once again came across the wreckage of the bomber. They souvenired a few small items but almost overturned their

excavator trying to life the aircraft. They opted simply to tell nobody, fill in the hole with soil and build the pool straight over the top.

Halifax JD413 was once again forgotten – until 2005 when a new generation of Datteln authorities decided to build a bigger pool on the site. This time the exhumation of the wreckage was thorough and professional.

Under the direction of Andreas Wachtel, chief executive of the local major hospital but also a nationally recognized aviation forensic expert, the Datteln bog gave up its 62-year-horde. In the wreckage were the remains of the four crew who went down with the aircraft. FLTLT Wilson, the only Australian on board, was recognized by his ID tags and part of his flying tunic which was of different material to RAF uniforms. In his left-hand pocket were two coins – a penny and a florin – badly burnt on one side but undamaged on the other and now in the possession of his son.

The remains were buried with full military honours at the Reichswald Commonwealth War Cemetery near Kleve on the German-Dutch border. At the graveside along with Australian and British top brass was Jim Hopkins, now the only surviving crew member. Beside him, blessing the graves, was 79-year-old Father Hugo Bresser and in the background, fellow Hitlerjungen and 1943 aircraft gunner Theo Stevermann, but no Wilson family member.

FLTLT Wilson's widow Mary had died some years earlier never knowing what had really happened to her husband. The RAAF presumably could not find the pilot's only son, John, to notify him of the re-internment at Reichswald. He only learned of events by chance two years too late.

Wings Summer 2008



Group portrait of pilots on course 34 of Blind Approach Training (BAT)

Identified is FltLt J L Wilson(412788) RAAF - 77 Squadron RAF.

Front Row: third from left.