

Sgt. Keith Allen 401359 RAAF

Keith Allen was an Australian bomb-aimer who had arrived at 49 Squadron at RAF Scampton in the early summer of 1942. One of their first tasks was to help search the North Sea for aircraft missing following a raid on Emden. But after leaving Lincolnshire at 1000 hours on the morning of 20 June nothing was heard of them again.

It is believed the Manchester crashed off the Frisian Islands and his was one of five bodies never recovered; he is now remembered on the Runnymede Memorial.



Keith, who was 31, was part of the crew of Manchester L7387, the last of six Manchesters lost by the squadron in a three-week period with the loss of 27 lives. From then on 49 became a Lancaster squadron.

He was the son of James and Mabel Allen and lived in Elwood, in Melbourne. He was educated in the city and later worked as an audit clerk. Keith was an all-round sportsman who excelled at rugby, tennis and swimming. He was one of three Australian members of the crew, another lived in Papua while a fifth crew member joined in Rhodesia, his family living in Nyasaland, now Malawi.

The others who died were the pilot Sgt. John O'Brien RAAF, second pilot Sgt. Charles Goldring, observer Sgt. Terence McKenna RAAF, wireless operator/air gunner Sgt. Harrington Price RAAF and air gunners Sgt. Alex Garos and Sgt. Neville Rogers.

His name can be found on panel 002.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook/Australian Museum.