

## **Ft. Sgt. Keith Stanley Franz Allen 431483 RAAF**



**War graves at Botley Cemetery, Oxford**

Keith Allen was the navigator of a Wellington III which crashed in bad weather, with an all-Australian crew on board, following a routine training exercise from 29 Operational Training Unit at RAF Bruntingthorpe in Leicestershire.

He and his crew were nearing the end of their training at Bruntingthorpe and were looking forward to moving onto 'heavies'. On the night of 5 January 1945 they had left their home airfield at 1915 hours on board Wellington BJ909 for a high-level bombing exercise but, on their return, found the weather had deteriorated markedly and the pilot was unable to find the funnel lights in the low cloud and murk that had descended. As he flew around to try to get a bearing on the airfield the Wellington hit high ground near the village of Kimcote, three miles from Lutterworth in Leicestershire. The only survivor was the rear gunner, Sgt. R J Leeson, who walked away with minor injuries.

Keith was 31 and lived with his wife Marjorie in Dulwich Hill, New South Wales. He was the son of Roy and Sophie Allen.

Those killed with him were the 19-year-old pilot Ft. Sgt. Douglas Savage RAAF, bomb-aimer Ft. Sgt. Len Cann RAAF, wireless operator Ft. Sgt. Maxwell Milne RAAF and air gunner Ft. Sgt. Colin Nolan RAAF.

Keith's name can be found on IBCC panel 002.

Illustration: Google