

Sgt Robert Armstrong 1567337 RAFVR

Robert was born in 1923 in Terregles, Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland, the only son of James and Agnes Armstrong.

Robert trained as a Flight Engineer and was posted to 101 Squadron straight from training in September 1943.

On the night of 30 March 1944, 795 aircraft were dispatched for an attack on Nuremberg. This was the last act of Bomber Harris's "Battle of Berlin", an attempt to destroy German morale by battering its cities night after night, before the bomber force turned its attentions to preparing the way for D-Day in June. A direct route, full moon and a new German weapon, the upward firing gun fitted to many fighters, would make this an incredibly challenging and dangerous mission. More than 200 night-fighters based around the Ruhr and the Rhine took to the skies that night. Twenty-six 101 Squadron Lancasters participated in the raid.

At 2205 hours on 30 March 1944 Robert, operating as the Flight Engineer, and the crew departed RAF Ludford Magna, Lincolnshire, in Lancaster III DV276 (SR-R), tasked with ABC duties for the raid.

At 0125 hours on 31 March, whilst on the return journey home, the Lancaster was shot down by a Bf110 flown by Oblt H Schultze of II./NJG5, one of 4 Lancasters he claimed that night, and crashed near Rothenbach, ENE of Nuremberg, killing all on board.

Seven 101 Sqn aircraft were lost on the raid, 47 men killed.

The raid was a major disaster for Bomber Command with the loss of 105 aircraft - Bomber Command's heaviest loss of the war. There were 721 casualties: - 542 men died, 6 injured, 161 POWs, with just 12 airmen evading capture. The damage to Nuremberg itself was slight - 256 buildings destroyed and 75 enemy dead.

Also Killed: P/O John Batten-Smith DFC (Pilot), P/O Howard Ernest Beer (Pilot), P/O Graham Harries Williams (Navigator), Flt. Sgt. Allan Henry Ross (Air Bomber), Flt. Sgt. Arthur Haynes (Air Gunner), Sgt. Robert Russell Roberts (Wireless Operator), Sgt. Hugh Fleming McClenaghan (Air Gunner)

Originally buried in the Furth Civil Cemetery, Bayern, Germany, in July 1948 Robert and the crew were re-located to Durnbach War Cemetery, Bayern.

Robert is commemorated on Wall Panel 3