

**Sgt. Arthur Ashby
574407 RAF**



Arthur Ashby was a young Lancaster flight engineer who was killed when his damaged aircraft crashed into a wood while trying to make an emergency landing in France.

He and his crew were attempting to land after being attacked during a raid on Stuttgart on the night of 24/25 July 1944, his 49 Squadron Lancaster PB250 EA-J crashing into a wood near the village of Coignières, west of Paris. There were no survivors and villagers helped recover the bodies and quickly organised a full funeral service for the seven aircrew who were buried in the village churchyard. A striking memorial to the crew of PB250 stands in the village today (*pictured left*).



Arthur (*pictured in the crew photograph above but not identified*) and his crew were on their ninth operation and had taken off from RAF Fiskerton at 2135 hours, one of 461 bombers which carried out a 'devastating' attack on the city.

His home was in Yeovil in Somerset and he was the 23-year-old son of Herbert and Florence

Ashby.

The others who died were the pilot F/O Walter Buchanan RAFVR, navigator Flt. Sgt. Philip Kitto RAFVR, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Ernest Shackleton RAFVR, wireless operator Sgt. George Picker RAFVR, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Clifford Crane RAFVR and rear gunner Sgt. Ernest Greenwood RAF.

His name can be found on panel 003.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook/aerosteles.net.