

## **Flt. Lt. Dorian Dick Bonnett DFC 45416 RAF**



Dorian was a pilot who served with 49 Squadron based at RAF Fiskerton. He was killed when his plane crashed in England returning from an operation to Milan, Italy, on 24 October 1942. He was the 23-year-old son of Claude and Winifred Bonnett and was married to Rosemary; he is buried in Littlehampton Cemetery in Sussex.

At 0630 hours on the morning of 24 October 1943 orders came in on the teleprinter giving details for a daylight attack on the Italian town of Milan. In this hazardous operation the 88 Lancasters of No. 5 Group were to fly independently across France, using the cloud as cover, before arriving at Lake Annecy, the Group's rendezvous. The bombers arrived over a surprised Milan around 1700 hours. They descended below the cloud base of 4,500 feet in order to deliver 135 tons of bombs during the next 18 minutes.

In the evening, Dorian's badly damaged aircraft was approaching RAF Ford, in Sussex, when it crashed some 400 metres short of the runway and was destroyed. Six crew members were killed and one was injured.

The rest of the crew of Lancaster W4306 were:

Sgt. R J Wallis – Flight Engineer (Killed)  
Flt. Sgt. R D Dangerfield DFM RAAF - Navigator (Killed)  
Flt. Sgt. R G Lawrence RAAF – Wireless Operator (Killed)  
Sgt. W A Colquhoun – Air Gunner (Injured)  
P/O W H I Myers DFM RAAF – Bomb Aimer (Killed)  
Sgt. E Brookes – Air Gunner (Killed)

Dorian's name can be found on Panel 11.

Photo and biography courtesy of the 49 Squadron Association.