

Flying Officer Lyle Edward Bowes 419253 RAAF

Lyle Bowes was born on 26 January 1923 in Canterbury, Victoria, Australia. He was the son of William Edward and Gladys Anna Wilhelmina Bowes of Frankston, Victoria, Australia.

He enlisted with the Royal Australian Air Force in Melbourne on 19 July 1942.

Lyle was the bomb aimer aboard No. 207 Squadron's Lancaster LM578 EM-C which took off from RAF Spilsby on 21 June 1944 at 2321 hours. It was one of 133 Lancasters which set off to attack the synthetic-oil plant at Wesseling. The weather forecast for the target area was for clear conditions, but the bombers encountered full cloud cover.

German night fighters made contact with the bomber force and some 37 Lancasters were lost, including the LM578. It is believed to have been shot down by Hauptmann Martin Drewes of the Stab III./NJG 1, who had left Leeuwarden flying a Bf 110 G-4.



The Lancaster had crashed in the North Sea off Overflakkee on the Dutch coast, killing all eight crew members. (Unusually, their aircraft was carrying a second bomb aimer on this operation – Flt. Sgt. Jackson). Lyle's body was washed up on the English coast and is buried in Cambridge City cemetery (Grave 14106).

He was 21 years old. The wording on his gravestone is "Loved and ever remembered. His duty courageously ended".

Lyle is on a roll of honour at Frankston, Victoria and remembered on Panel 119, Commemorative Area, Australian War Memorial, Canberra ACT

His fellow crew members lost were:

F/O Trevor Tressler Smart
F/O Ronald Charles McArthur
F/O Douglas John Faires
Flt. Sgt. Henry Archibald Shaw
Sgt. Kenneth Walter Sansom
P/O Charles David Boyce
Flt. Sgt. Leslie Frederick Jackson

Lyle's name can be found on IBCC Panel 011

References:

Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour On-Line Records (RAAF Casualty Information compiled by Alan Storr (409804))