

Flt. Sgt. Noel Joseph Bullen 409503 RAAF

Noel was born on 26 December 1917 in St Kilda, Victoria, Australia, the son of Sydney Joseph Bullen and Minnie Bullen (née Kennedy).

Educated at St Anthony's Primary School, Glenhuntly and De La Salle College, Malvern, Noel was employed as a shipping clerk by Jackson and Spring, Melbourne, when, in August 1940, he volunteered for aircrew duties in the RAAF.

Called up in September 1941, following basic aircrew training in Australia, Noel was sent to Canada in March 1942 to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme where, in September 1942, he was awarded his navigator badge and immediately embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at No. 27 OTU RAF Lichfield, Staffordshire, and No. 1662 HCU, RAF Blyton, Lincolnshire, Noel was posted to 101 Squadron at RAF Holme-on-Spalding-Moor, Yorkshire, in April 1943 before the squadron moved to RAF Ludford Magna, Lincolnshire, in June 1943.

On 23/24 August 1943 Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Berlin. A combined force of 727 aircraft, including twenty crews from 101 Squadron, was allocated to the op. Two crews failed to return.

At 2027 hours on 23 August Noel, operating as the navigator, and the crew departed RAF Ludford Magna in Lancaster I ED328 (SR-S).

At 0050 hours on 24 August Noel's aircraft was intercepted from below by Oblt. Werner Husemann of Stab/NJG 1, flying a Bf110 from Deelen airfield, Netherlands. The Lancaster's fuel tanks were hit causing a mid-air explosion, killing all on board. The wreckage crashed at Lanke, 6km west of Biesenthal, Brandenburg.

Also killed were the pilot Flt. Sgt. Robert Clarence Naffin RAAF, flight engineer Sgt. David Morgan Ellis, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Douglas John Tresidder RAAF, wireless operator Sgt. John Armstrong Currey, mid-upper gunner Sgt. John Henry Phillips and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Everard John Phillips RAAF.

Originally buried in Biesenthal Friedhof, Brandenburg, Germany, Noel was moved in November 1946 to the Berlin War Cemetery, Germany.

Noel is commemorated on IBCC Wall Panel 15.

Photo Source: naa.gov.au

