

## F/S William Desmond Callaghan 433892 RAAF



William was born on 20 May 1925, the son of William Ernest and Clarice Evelyn Callaghan, of Fairfield, New South Wales, Australia, and brother of Lalla and Denise. He enlisted in the RAAF, in Sydney, on the 5 June 1943. He was the first Fairfield serviceman to die in 1945, and the last to die in Europe, during WWII.

He was an Air Gunner serving with 170 Squadron, based at RAF Hemswell, near Gainsborough, Lincolnshire; the Squadron motto being "Videre non videri" – "To see and not be seen".

Lancaster III ME388 TC-H took off at 1704 hours on 7 March 1945, from Hemswell airfield, with 12 others from the squadron on a night operation to bomb the jet engine factory supplying Junkers, at Dessau, Germany. Its intention was to dislocate supply lines, and disorganise the Germans. The weather for take-off was good but very soon afterwards, due to heavy cloud, it was reported that instructions had been sent to the crews to bomb the Wanganui flares (target indicators). At 2031 hours, ME388 was attacked by a night fighter, exploding in the air and crashing at Leckmart, Germany, with the loss of all the crew.

William is buried at Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany. Coll. grave 30. E. 1-7. The epitaph reads "Greater love hath no man always loved and remembered". He was 19 years old.

F/Sgt. William Desmond Callaghan RAAF (killed)  
F/O John Stennett Walker RAAF (killed)  
F/Sgt. Wilfred Henry Charles Fuller RAFVR (killed)  
F/Sgt. John Mahoney RAFVR (killed)  
F/Sgt David Charles Palmer RAAF (killed)  
F/O Kenneth George Powell RAF (killed)  
F/Sgt. Leslie Thomas RAFVR (killed)

He is commemorated on Panel 16

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