## FS Colin Henry Eastgate 430019 RAAF



Colin was born on 12 November 1914 in Coburg, Victoria, Australia, the eldest son of Sqn Ldr Ernest William John Eastgate RAAF and Myrtle Irene Hazel Avalon Eastgate nee Pierce. In May 1939 he married Jean Simpson in Horsham, Victoria; they had one son.

Educated at Colac West State School and Colac Agricultural High School, Colin was employed as a commission agent for the Vacuum Oil Company, Corryong, Victoria when, in May 1942, he volunteered for service in the RAAF.

Called up in December 1942, Colin completed his aircrew training in Australia in June 1943 with the award of his Air Gunner badge and embarked for the UK in August.

Following advanced training at 27 OTU RAF Lichfield, Staffordshire and 1660 HCU RAF Swinderby, Lincolnshire, in February 1944 Colin was posted to 463 Sqn at RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire.




On 10/11 May 1944 Bomber Command was tasked with attacks on the Belgian and French marshalling yards at Courtrai, Dieppe, Ghent, Lens and Lille. A combined force of 506 aircraft, including fourteen 463 Sqn crews, was allocated to the op. The squadron's target was Lille, used by enemy forces for the transportation of supplies to the Western Front.

At 22:14 on the 10 May Colin, operating as the Mid Upper Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Waddington in Lancaster I LL881 (JO-E).

Post war it was established that, whilst outbound, Colin's aircraft exploded mid-air and the bulk of the wreckage fell on a factory in the southeast suburbs of Lille, France, killing all on board.

Also killed: FO George Oswald Jones RAAF (Nav); FO Dudley Francis Ward DFC RAAF (Pilot); PO William John Lewis RAAF (FE); WO Lloyd George McKenzie RAAF (AB); FS John Henry Brown RAAF (WOp/AG); FS George Martin Dann RAAF (AG)

Colin is buried in Forest-Sur-Marque Communal Cemetery, Nord, France

Colin is commemorated on Wall Panel 31

Photo Source: naa.gov.au