

**F/O Dennis
Kieran Flaherty
155505 RAFVR**



Dennis Flaherty was a young Mosquito pilot who died along with his navigator when their aircraft crashed on a hillside in the Rhône valley after experiencing severe weather conditions in the summer of 1944.

His aircraft, DZ636 AZ-N, was one of nine Pathfinders from 627 Squadron that accompanied 178 Lancasters from No. 5 Group to attack the rail yards in Givors to block German reinforcements reaching the battlefield in Normandy.

DZ636 had taken off from Woodhall Spa at 2312 hours on the night of 26/27 July 1944 and is believed to have crashed before reaching the target, hitting a hillside near the village of Letra, between Lyon and Charolles. Both Dennis and his Scottish navigator, F/O John Christie, were later buried in Letra Communal Cemetery.

Dennis had joined 627 Squadron with his navigator a month earlier from No. 1655 Mosquito Training Unit. He was the 23-year-old son of John and Mary Flaherty of Bradford. A section of the tail of DZ636 was later recovered and can now be seen in the Thorpe Park Visitor Centre at Tattershall Thorpe. It is housed in a building once part of one of the communal sites of RAF Woodhall Spa.

Dennis' name can be found on IBCC panel 035.

Sources: Aviation Safety Network/At First Sight by Alan B Webb/Thorpe Park.