

Flt. Lt. Alan Lonsdale Lazenby DFC 121466 RAFVR

Alan was born on 16 August 1915 in Guisborough, Yorkshire, the only son of Walter and Ada Lazenby (née Dunn). In 1939 he married Mabel Dalgetty in Scarborough, Yorkshire.

Educated at Guisborough Grammar School and Scarborough School of Art, Yorkshire, Alan qualified as an Art Teacher in August 1940 but volunteered for aircrew duties immediately after he graduated.

Alan was selected for pilot training and was awarded his wings and commissioned in May 1942, arriving on 101 Squadron at RAF Ludford Magna, Lincolnshire, from No. 1667 OCU in October 1943.

On the night of 16/17 December 1943, Alan and his crew were forced to bale out of their Lancaster close to base when, on return from Berlin, they were ordered to divert and had insufficient fuel to do so. Their next op would be their last. For his actions that night, Alan was awarded the DFC. His citation read:

"One night in December 1943, this officer was the pilot of an aircraft detailed to attack Berlin. Soon after the take-off, one of the aircraft's engines became defective, emitting dense quantities of black smoke and a long flame from the exhaust. In spite of this, Flt Lt Lazenby continued his flight to the target which, despite difficulty in gaining height, he successfully attacked. When crossing the North Sea, on the return flight, it was evident that, to complete the sortie, the petrol supply would have to be carefully governed. By skilfully using his engines, however, Flt Lt Lazenby succeeded in reaching this country. Flt Lt Lazenby displayed great skill and determination throughout."

On the night of 2/3 January 1944, 383 aircraft were dispatched for a second consecutive night attack on Berlin, with twelve 101 Squadron Lancasters participating in the raid. The force flew outbound via Holland and South of Bremen and, with no diversionary force to split their task, the German night fighters were flying in considerable numbers around Berlin.

Shortly before midnight on 2 January Alan and his crew departed RAF Ludford Magna in Lancaster III DV269 (SR-M). They successfully reached and bombed the target, although the raid was subsequently considered ineffectual, and they headed for home.

At 0258 hours the aircraft was engaged by a night fighter flown by Oblt. Albert Walter of I./NJG6, flying a Bf110 from Mainz-Finthen an air base 320 miles SW of Berlin. The bomber crashed at Michendorff, 5 miles S of Potsdam, Brandenburg, Germany, killing 4 of the 8 crew, the survivors being taken as POWs.

Also killed were the mid-upper gunner Sgt. Gerald Beckett RCAF, special duties operator Sgt. Charles Brown and rear gunner Sgt. Donald Stephens. The survivors were the flight engineer Sgt. Charles Lindsay, navigator F/O Weston Craig, air bomber F/O James McClure RCAF and wireless operator Sgt. Albert Walton.

Originally buried in the Friedhof Michendorff Cemetery, Brandenburg, Germany, in October 1946 Alan was moved to the Berlin 1939-45 War Cemetery, Germany.

Alan is commemorated on Wall Panel 62.