## PO William John Lewis 10119 RAAF



William was born on 29 March 1912 in Geelong, Victoria, Australia, the son of William James Lewis and Margaret Theresa Lewis nee Fitzpatrick. In July 1940 he married Edna Merle Shea in Melbourne; they had one daughter.

William was employed as a fitter and mechanic when, in February 1940, he volunteered for service in the RAAF. Called up in April 1940, William trained as a Fitter IIE and in June 1941 he embarked for the UK.

Working with 264 Sqn, 3064 and 3093 Echelon, 460 and 1650 Conversion Flights and 467 Sqn, in December 1942 William re-mustered as a Flight Engineer and commenced training at No. 4 School of Technical Training RAF St Athan, Glamorgan, Wales where, in February 1943, he was awarded his Flight Engineer badge.

Commissioned in December 1943, William completed advanced training at 1660 HCU RAF Swinderby, Lincolnshire and, in March 1944, William 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 William, operating as the Flight Engineer, and the crew departed RAF Waddington in Lancaster I LL881 (JO-E).

Post war it was established that, whilst outbound, William'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); WO Lloyd George McKenzie RAAF (AB); FS John Henry Brown RAAF (WOp/AG); FS George Martin Dann RAAF (AG); FS Colin Henry Eastgate RAAF (AG)

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

William is commemorated on Wall Panel 63

Photo Source: naa.gov.au