

FS Colin Kerr Menzies 416594 RAAF

Colin was born on 23 December 1918 in St Peters, South Australia, the son of Thomas Peebles Menzies and Jessie Victoria Menzies nee Bailey.

Educated at Meningie Public School, Unley High School and Norwood High School, Colin was employed as a clerk by Wm. Haughton & Co, Adelaide when, in July 1941, he enlisted in the RAAF.

In February 1942 Colin completed his pilot training in Australia with the award of his wings, and in June 1942 he embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 27 OTU RAF Lichfield, Staffordshire, 1662 HCU RAF Blyton, Lincolnshire, and 1656 HCU RAF Lindholme, Yorkshire, in March 1943 Colin was posted to 101 Sqn at RAF Holme-on-Spalding Moor, Yorkshire.

On the night of 16/17 April 1943, a combined force of 598 Bomber Command crews were tasked with an operation against the Skoda Armament works, Pilsen, Czechoslovakia with the main force of 327 crews targeting the works, and 271 crews on a diversionary raid to Mannheim. Fifteen 101 Sqn aircraft were allocated to the attack on the Pilsen factory.

At 21:21 on 16 April Colin and his crew departed RAF Holme-on-Spalding Moor in Lancaster I ED379 (SR-F).

At 01:26 on 17 April Colin's aircraft was coned by searchlights of the lei. Scheinw. 11/XII and engaged by both heavy and light Flak units. At 01:28 the aircraft crashed in the district of Dutzendteich, Nürnberg. The WOOp/AG was the only crew member to bale out and was taken as POW.

The raid was not a success. A large asylum building 7 miles from the target was mistaken for the factory, and only 6 crews brought back bombing photographs which were within 3 miles of the real target. The Skoda works were untouched.

Also killed: FO Thomas Maxwell Taylor RAAF (AB); FS James Henry Fitch RCAF (AG); Sgt Henry Evans (Nav); Sgt Jack Monks (AG); Sgt Harold Albert Upton (FE)

Originally buried in the South Nurnberg Cemetery, Nuremberg, Germany, in September 1947 Colin was moved to the Durnbach War Cemetery, Bayern, Germany.

Colin is commemorated on Wall Panel 73

Colin's brother, Sgt Stewart Keith Menzies RAAF, was killed in service on 6 February 1942 flying in the Far East.

Photo Source: naa.gov.au

