

Flt. Sgt. Robert Clarence Naffin 416601 RAAF

Robert was born on 22 February 1920 in Adelaide, South Australia, the son of Clarence Naffin and Fanny Olive Grace Naffin (née Hodsmen). In November 1942 he married Diana Stephanie M Mantle in Kington, Herefordshire. They had one daughter.

Educated at Pulteney Grammar School, Adelaide, Robert was employed as a salesman and store manager by Vardon and Sons, Adelaide, when in March 1941 he volunteered for aircrew duties in the RAAF.

Called up in July 1941, Robert completed his pilot training in Australia in April 1942 with the award of his wings, and he embarked for the UK in June.

Following advanced training at No. 27 OTU RAF Lichfield, Staffordshire, and No. 1662 HCU, RAF Blyton, Lincolnshire, Robert was posted to 101 Squadron at RAF Holme-on-Spalding-Moor, Yorkshire, in April 1943 before the squadron moved to RAF Ludford Magna, Lincolnshire, in June 1943.



On 23/24 August 1943 Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Berlin. A combined force of 727 aircraft, including twenty crews from 101 Squadron, was allocated to the op. Two crews failed to return.

At 2027 hours on 23 August Robert and his crew departed RAF Ludford Magna in Lancaster I ED328 (SR-S).

At 0050 hours on 24 August Robert's aircraft was intercepted from below by Oblt. Werner Husemann of Stab/NJG 1, flying a Bf110 from Deelen airfield, Netherlands. The Lancaster's fuel tanks were hit causing a mid-air explosion, killing all on board. The wreckage crashed at Lanke, 6km west of Biesenthal, Brandenburg.

Also killed were the flight engineer Sgt. David Morgan Ellis, navigator Flt. Sgt. Noel Joseph Bullen RAAF, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Douglas John Tresidder RAAF, wireless operator Sgt. John Armstrong Currey, mid-upper gunner Sgt. John Henry Phillips and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Everard John Phillips RAAF.

Originally buried in Biesenthal Friedhof, Brandenburg, Germany, Robert was moved in November 1946 to the Berlin War Cemetery, Germany.

Robert is commemorated on IBCC Wall Panel 78.

Photo Source: naa.gov.au