

FS Ronald Alexander John Anderson 36139 RNZAF

Ronald was born on 13 December 1913 in Warminster, Wiltshire, England, the son of John Anderson and Matilda E Anderson nee Henstridge. The family emigrated to New Zealand when Ronald was a child and they settled in Christchurch.

Educated at Christchurch High School, in November 1936 Ronald joined the RNZAF as a Wireless Operator. Completing his training in New Zealand, in January 1938 Ronald was sent to the UK for further training with the RAF.

In July 1939, Ronald was posted to RAF Marham, Norfolk to join the first flight of 30 Wellington aircraft ordered by the New Zealand government due to be flown to New Zealand. However, on the outbreak of war these plans were cancelled and the crews and aircraft formed the nucleus of 75(NZ) Sqn. In April 1940 75(NZ) Sqn moved to RAF Feltwell, Norfolk.

On 20/21 July 1940 Bomber Command were tasked with an op against enemy airfields in Holland and Germany. A combined force of 95 aircraft, including nine (NZ) crews, were allocated to the op.

Just after 20:00 on 20 July Ronald, operating as the WOp/AG, and the crew departed RAF Feltwell in Wellington Ic R3165 (AA-L).

At 02:33 Ronald's aircraft was coned by searchlights and intercepted by Oblt Siegfried Wandam of the Stab I./NJG 1, flying a Bf 110 from Borkenberge airfield, Lüdinghausen, Germany. The Wellington crashed at Weseke, Borken, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, 40 miles NNW of Horst airfield, killing all on board. This was Ronald's 11th op.

Also killed: FO Samuel Miles MacKenzie Watson MiD (Pilot); FO Edward Colin Joseph Cameron RNZAF (Pilot); Sgt Gordon Murray Cumming (Obs); Sgt John Lewis Owen RNZAF (AG)

Originally buried in Weseke Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, in February 1947 Ronald and the crew were moved to Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.

Ronald is commemorated on Wall Panel 123

Photo Source: 75nzsquadron.wordpress.com

