

FS Loch Lomond Bentley 403936 RNZAF

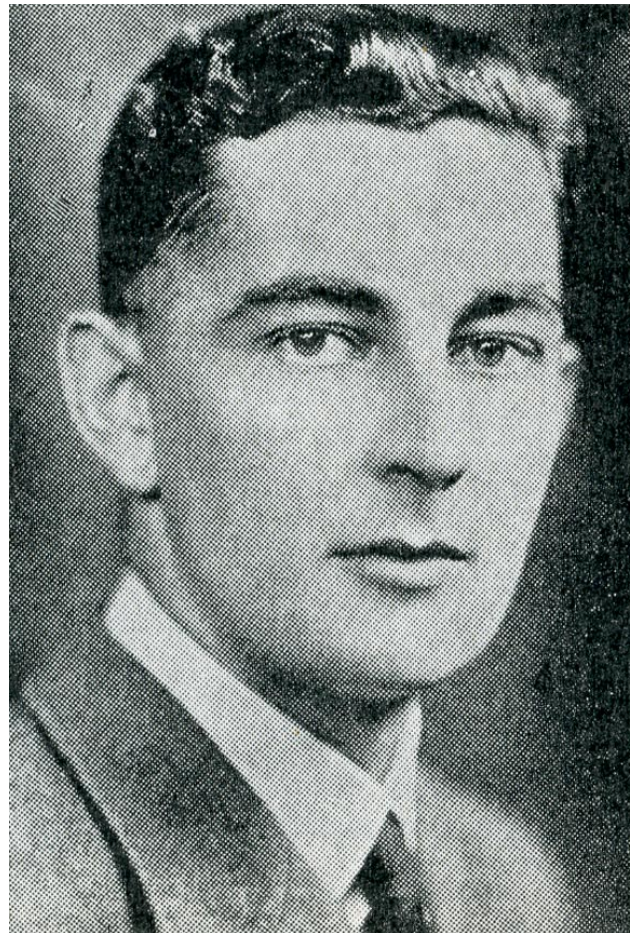
Loch was born on 6 December 1913 in Te Kuiti, Waikato, New Zealand the son of Henry William Bentley and Margaret Jane Bentley nee Daziel. In 1941 he married Winifred Kathleen Frost in New Zealand.

Educated at Te Kuiti District High School, Loch was employed as a guide at the Waitomo Caves by the New Zealand Government Tourist Department when, in April 1939, he applied for service with the RNZAF.

Called up in October 1940, Loch completed his training in New Zealand in May 1941 with the award of his Wings, and he embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at 11 OTU RAF Bassingbourn, Hertfordshire, in October 1941 Loch was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Feltwell, Norfolk.

On 23/24 December 1941 Bomber Command was tasked with an op against Brest. A combined force of 47 aircraft were allocated to the raid, including eight 75(NZ) Sqn crews.



In the early evening of 23 December Loch and his crew departed RAF Feltwell in Wellington Ic Z8834 (AA-P).

On the return from the raid, and with the airfield in sight, Loch was ordered to circle a beacon for a short while in order to let some of the aircraft which had returned earlier to land. The weather was misty with slight patches of fog. After 30 minutes holding, Loch was given permission to begin his approach and commenced a normal circuit. Whilst downwind, he ran into a fog patch and lost sight of the flare path and, in an attempt to regain a visual on the flarepath, descended to 500ft. With the altimeter showing 500 feet, on breaking fog the aircraft was just 10 feet above ground. After clipping a tree, at 23:47 the aircraft crashed 2m E of Berner's Heath and 5m SW of Thetford, Norfolk, killing Loch. The rest of the crew survived. This was Loch's 8th op.

Loch is buried in St Nicholas Churchyard, Feltwell, Norfolk.

Loch is commemorated on Wall Panel 130

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum.com