

Section Officer Barbara Kathleen (Patsy) Blakiston-H

Barbara (known as Patsy) was born on 24 November 1917 in Co Down, Northern Ireland the youngest daughter of Lt Col James Edward Blakiston-Houston and Dorothy Irene Blakiston-Houston nee Rea.

Educated at Westonbirt School, Gloucestershire she joined the WAAF shortly after the commencement of war and was commissioned as Section Officer in March 1941.

On 16 March 1942, 57 Sqn Wellington (X3599) departed RAF Feltwell at 10:45 on a cross-country exercise to Aldergrove, Northern Ireland. Patsy was on board taking the opportunity to travel home on leave to Ireland. Bad weather was encountered over the Irish Sea and, in order to continue visually, the pilot descended from 5000 feet to 800 feet to keep below cloud. As they approached the coast, the aircraft commenced a climb to avoid the hilly terrain but, despite both engines running normal, the aircraft flew into Eagle Rock, Slieve Donard, Co Down killing 6 of the 7 on board. Only the rear-gunner who was at the back of the aircraft survived.

Also killed were : Flt Lt Hugh Lamour Magee, FO John William Elliott RCAF, FO Harold Eric Hunter RNZAF, Sgt William Swordy Taylor, Reverend James Dawson Crawford

Patsy is buried at St John, Loughinisland, Ireland

Patsy is commemorated on Wall Panel 132

Photo Source: The Larne Times

