

Wg Cdr Peter Hiley Dutton IGSM 34040 RAF

Peter was born on 3 February 1913 in Skegness, Lincolnshire, the eldest son of Reginald John Garfield Dutton and Dora Annie Dutton nee Hiley. In 1938 he married Marjorie Winifred Dyer in Bareilly, Bengal, India. They had two daughters.

Educated at Magdalen College Schools, Wainfleet and Oxford, Peter joined the RAF in 1933 on a Short Service Commission. After flying training at No3 FTS at RAF Spitalgate, Grantham, Peter was awarded his wings and posted to the Army Co-Operation School at RAF Old Sarum, Wiltshire. Joining 20 Sqn at Peshawar, India in 1934, Peter would serve in India until 1942.

Peter saw active service on the NW Frontier during the Waziristan Campaign, following which he was awarded the IGSM. Postings to Staff HQ at Simla, Delhi followed and Peter completed Staff College at Quetta. He was granted a Permanent Commission in 1939.

Returning from India, in September 1942 Peter was posted to take command of 107 Sqn at RAF Great Massingham, Norfolk.

On 6 December 1942, 107 Sqn were tasked as part of Operation Oyster, a daylight raid on the Philips radio and valve factory in Eindhoven. The 8th Air Force operated a diversionary raid to Lille using Spitfires as escort. A low level raid in clear conditions led to very accurate bombing and the factory was extensively damaged. The raid was deliberately planned for a Sunday when few employees would have been on site. Full production took 6 months to achieve due to the level of damage. This successful raid was the biggest daylight raid of the war so far comprising 36 Bostons, 12 Mosquitos and 48 Venturas.

At 11:22 Peter and his crew departed RAF Great Massingham in Boston III AH740 (OM-A). The crew were known to have bombed the target, but on the return were shot down by FW 190 A-4s of 5./JG1 from Schiphol airfield. At 12:59 the aircraft crashed into the sea 6km West of Katwijk aan Zee, killing all on board.

Also killed : Flt Lt Robert William McCarthy DFM (WOp/AG); Flt Lt Norman Henry Shepherd DFM (Nav); PO Louis M Delanchey Free French Air Force (AG)

Peter has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey

Peter is commemorated on Wall Panel 158

Photo Source: Boston Guardian

