

## **Sgt Robert Ewen Ernest Fotheringham 391833 RNZAF**

Robert, known as Bob, was born on 8 December 1911 in Auckland, New Zealand, the son of John Fotheringham and May Fotheringham nee Alison.

Educated at King's College, Auckland, Robert was employed as a clerk when, in September 1939, he applied for aircrew duties with the RNZAF.

Called up in December 1939, Robert completed his pilot training in New Zealand and, in June 1940, he was awarded his wings. In August Robert embarked for the UK.

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

On 15/16 July 1941 Bomber Command was tasked with an op against individual targets in Duisburg, Germany, a major logistical centre in the Ruhr Area and location of chemical, steel and iron industries. A combined force of 38 Wellingtons, including nine 75(NZ) crews, were allocated to the op.



At 23:00 on 15 July 1941 Robert and his crew departed RAF Feltwell in Wellington IC R3171 (AA).

At 03:00 on 16 July Robert's aircraft was hit by flak, setting the port engine on fire, and the aircraft came down in the North Sea off the Dutch coast, killing all on board. Robert was one of only two crew members who were recovered for burial. This was Robert's 29th Op.

Also killed: Sgt Sydney Allan Dyer RNZAF (WOp/AG); Sgt Phillip Edgar Hare RNZAF (WOp/AG); Sgt Eric Vincent Keiran Higgins RAAF (Pilot); Sgt Douglas Malcolm MacKinnon RNZAF (AG); Sgt Joseph Harold Campbell Roberts RCAF (Obs)

Robert was washed ashore on Petten Beach, North Holland, and buried in Petten Protestant Churchyard. In April 1947 Robert was moved to Bergen-op-Zoom War Cemetery, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands

Robert is commemorated on Wall Panel 166

Photo Source: [75nzsquadron.wordpress.com](http://75nzsquadron.wordpress.com)