

Sgt John Cuthbert McKechnie Gibson 404352 RNZAF

John was born on 18 August 1912 in Thames, Waikato, New Zealand, the son of John Govan McKechnie Gibson and Lillian Isabel Gibson nee Lewes. In August 1940 he married Ethel Frances Mason in Wellington, New Zealand. They had one child.

Educated at Thames High School, John was employed as a clerk by the Post and Telegraph Department when, in October 1939, he volunteered for aircrew duties with the RNZAF.

Called up in November 1940, John completed his pilot training in New Zealand in March 1941 with the award of his wings, and in May he embarked for the UK.

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

On 7/8 November 1941 Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Berlin, Germany. A combined force of 169 aircraft, including fourteen 75(NZ) crews, were allocated to the op. This was the last major raid on Berlin until January 1943.

At 18:10 on 7 November John, operating as the 2nd Pilot, and the crew departed RAF Feltwell in Wellington Ic X9951 (AA).

At 23:10 John's aircraft was engaged by the 2./Reserve-Flak-Abteilung 113 (Einsatz Hannover) and crashed at Werdohl, Nordrhein-Westfalen, 45 miles E of Dusseldorf. John was the only casualty, the remainder of the crew were taken as POW. This was John's 11th op.

Originally buried in the cemetery at Loh Waldfriedhof, Near Ludenscheid, Nordrhein-Westfalen, post war he was moved to the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany

John is commemorated on Wall Panel 169

Photo Source: 75nzsquadron.wordpress.com

