

Sgt Anthony James Hannah 40738 RNZAF

Anthony was born on 10 November 1920 in Wellington, New Zealand, the son of James Alexander Hannah and Sybil Maud Hannah nee Johnson. Educated at Wellesley College, Huntley School and Christ's College Christchurch, Anthony was employed by the Bank of New Zealand until, when aged just 20, he took joint control of the family firm - R Hannah & Co Ltd, a shoe manufacturing and retailing business. Anthony enlisted in March 1940 and completed training at Levin and No 1 Air Observer School at Ohakea where he received his Observer badge in July 1940. In August 1940 he embarked for the UK. Training was completed at 13 OTU and he was posted to 107 Sqn in January 1941.



Between 3 March and 10 May 1941, 107 Sqn was on loan to Coastal Command and stationed at RAF Leuchars, Fife. Duties whilst in Coastal Command included shipping strikes, convoy duties, coastal patrols, submarine searches and attacks on enemy airfields and harbours. At 18:00 on 24 April 1941, Anthony, operating as the Observer, and the crew departed RAF Leuchars in Blenheim IV Z5795 (OM-M), tasked with a Stand (reconnaissance) along the Norwegian coast. The aircraft was shot down by enemy fighters, crashing at Flekkero, Kristiansand, killing all on board.

The War Poet, Flt Lt Anthony Richardson RAFVR, dedicated a poem to the crew in his 2nd book of poetry "These-Our Children" published in 1943. - "AFTERMATH (For Mac and his crew)".

*For whom lie dead in Kristiansand
And buried by a foreign hand
Can be no scent of Scottish seas,
Nor tang of fir upon the breeze,
No sight of Dundee's chimney stacks.
Indeed, their earth-dimmed hearing lacks
Sound of the pipes upon the hills,
Sound of the rivers and the rills,
Nor all the whisperings of the Usk
Can follow them into the dusk;
And their cold fingers cannot touch
The Fifeshire girls they loved as much
As any friend, who made his way
Across the sky that fatal day.
And yet there only lies between
Their hearts and mine the grey and green
Dark Northern sea. How should we fail
To clasp our hands across a veil
That scarce divides their lives and mine,
And is so slight and frail and fine
That still I hear them call to me
Across two hundred miles of sea?*

Also Killed: PO Charles Peter Hope Maclaren (Pilot); Sgt Douglas Stevenson Hutcheon King (WOp/AG)

Anthony has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. His name is also inscribed on PO Maclaren's grave in Kristiansand Civil Cemetery, Norway.

Anthony is commemorated on Wall Panel 176

Photo Source: Findagrave