Sgy Hedley Maurice Hawkins 404433 RAAF



Hedley was born on 9 August 1921 in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, the son of Samuel Hedley Hemming Hawkins and Vera May Hawkins nee Bott.

Educated at the Virginia State School and Brisbane State High, Queensland, Hedley was employed as a clerk by the Shell Company of Australia when, in January 1939, he enlisted with the Royal Australian Artillery. In August 1940, Hedley transferred to the RAAF.

Hedley completed his aircrew training in Australia with the award of his wings in February 1941, and embarked for the UK in May.

Following advanced training at 27 OTU RAF Lichfield, Staffordshire, in November 1941 Hedley was posted to 460 Sqn RAAF at RAF Molesworth, Huntingdonshire. At the end of his tour, in July 1942 Hedley was posted to 101 Sqn at RAF Stradishall, Suffolk.

On the 21/22 September 1942 a combined force of seventeen aircraft, including eight 101 Sqn crews, were allocated to gardening ops in the Heligoland Approaches and Kiel Bay. Hedley's target was Kiel Bay. Hedley and his crew departed RAF Stradishall in Wellington III X3457 (SR-R). All squadron aircraft were airborne by 19:55.

A joint claim was made for the downing of Hedley's aircraft. Both Ofw
Karl Haisch flying a Do217 from Westerland/Sylt airfield, Germany, who claimed a 'Wellington' at 00:18 into the sea 47 km W of Römö island, and by Major Günther Radusch of Stab II./NJG 3 based at Schleswig airfield, Germany, who claimed a 'Wellington' destroyed over the sea 20 km NW of Sylt at 01:01. Nothing further was heard from the crew and it is probable that they were the victim of one of these claims.

Also Killed: FS John Rimmer (Pilot/AB); FS Joseph Eli Rodgers RCAF (WOp/AG); FS Whitby Shankland (AG); Sgt John Sanderson Sagar (Obs)

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

Hedley is commemorated on Wall Panel 179

Photo Source: IBCC