

Sgt. Hugh Patrick Henry 425158 RAAF

Hugh was born 15 December 1920, the son of John and Anne Cecelia Henry, of Greenmount, Queensland, Australia. He had one brother, and four sisters, and enlisted in the RAAF on 31 January 1942.

He was an Air Gunner serving with 1663 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Rufforth, North Yorkshire.

Handley Page Halifax V, DG412 -B, took off from Rufforth airfield on 27 August 1943, on a daytime Bullseye exercise; it was the final flight before completing their training, and was returning from a mission to bomb Brest, in France. During the flight, the pilot lost control while practicing evasive action, and in the dive that followed, the aircraft came apart under the excessive loads imposed upon its airframe. It was considered almost certain the crew were trapped by the centrifugal force, and their bodies were recovered from the crash site at Langtree, four miles south west of Great Torrington, Devon.



Hugh is buried at Heanton Punchardon (St. Augustine) Churchyard, North Devon. Row Q. Grave 11. The epitaph reads "Irrequietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te domine" (Our heart is restless until it rests in you). He was 22 years old.

A granite memorial stone in the village of Langtree commemorates the loss of the crew; the dedication service being held on the 66th anniversary of the crash, with members of the airmen's families attending.

Sgt. Hugh Patrick Henry RAAF, Air Gunner (killed)
F/O William Henry Graham, Air Bomber (killed)
Sgt. John Peter Williams, Pilot (killed)
F/Sgt. Peter Chadwick Bartle RAAF, Air Gunner (killed)
Sgt. Raymond Frederick Stainsby, Navigator (killed)
Sgt. George Rogerson Wheatley, Flight Engineer (killed)
Sgt. James Taylor, Wireless Operator/Air Gunner (killed)

He is commemorated on Panel 180

Picture courtesy of Patrick Otter