

FS Frank Douglas Higham 416116 RNZAF

Frank was born on 9 June 1919 in Onehunga, Auckland, New Zealand, the son of Thomas Higham and Olive Emily Higham nee Laing.

Educated at Otahuhu Technical High School, Frank was employed as a sheep farmer when, in January 1941, he applied for service with the RNZAF.

Called up in November 1941, after basic training in New Zealand, in March 1942 Frank was sent to Canada to continue his pilot training under the Empire Air Training Scheme. In September 1942 Frank was awarded his Wings and he embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at 11 OTU RAF Westcott, Buckinghamshire and 1651 HCU RAF Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, in August 1943 Frank was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Mepal, Cambridgeshire.

On 27/28 August 1943 Bomber Command was tasked with an op against Nuremberg, an important site for military production including aircraft, submarines, and tank engines. A combined force of 674 aircraft, including nineteen 75(NZ) crews, were allocated to the op.

At 21:30 on 27 August Frank and his crew departed RAF Mepal in Stirling III EE955 (AA-D).

At 02:20 on 28 August Frank's aircraft was intercepted by Hptm August Geiger of 7./NJG 1, flying a Bf110 from Twente Airfield, Netherlands. The aircraft crashed at Schwarzenau, 12 miles ENE of Wurzburg, Lower Franconia, Germany, killing all on board. This was Frank's 7th op.

Also Killed: FS Martin Bailey RCAF (AB); FS Cyril Jack Bridger RNZAF (WOp/AG); Sgt Albert Clarke (AG); Sgt John Richard Culshaw (Nav); Sgt Harold Jennings (AG); Sgt Robert Renfrew (FE)

Originally buried in Schwarzerau Civilian Cemetery, Bayern, Germany, in June 1948 Frank was moved to Durnbach War Cemetery, Bayern.

Frank is commemorated on Wall Panel 181

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum.com

