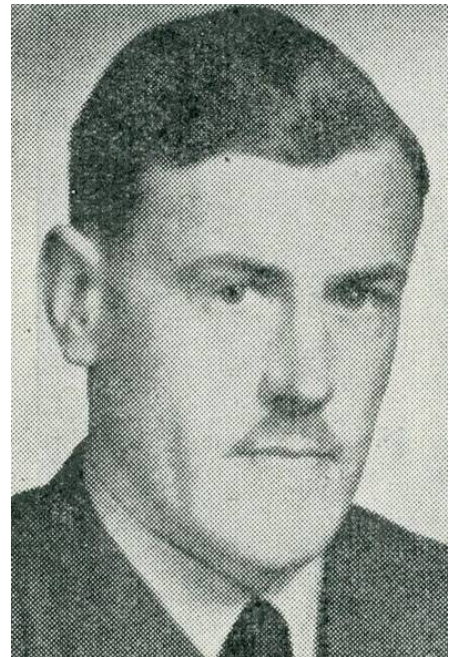


FO Harold Eric Hunter 402060 RNZAF

Harold was born on 23 March 1916 in West Melton, Canterbury, New Zealand the son of Eric Douglas Hunter and Rose Amelia Hunter nee Watson. He was married to Maire Ethel Fear and had one child.

Educated at Timaru Boy's High School, Harold was a gifted sportsman, playing for the 1st XV and was the School Boxing Champion. Prior to his enlistment in July 1940, Harold was employed as a Clerk for the Mt Cook & Southern Lakes Tourist Company, Timaru.

Harold commenced flying training in November 1940 and was awarded his pilot wings in April 1941. Following his arrival in the UK, Harold completed his conversation and ops training before being posted to 57 Sqn at RAF Feltwell in September 1941. At the time of his death he had 405 flying hours and had completed 17 Ops.



On 16 March 1942, Harold and a small crew departed RAF Feltwell at 10:45 on a cross-country exercise to Aldergrove, Northern Ireland in 57 Sqn Wellington (X3599). Also on board were 3 station personnel with family in Ireland who were taking the opportunity to fly home on leave. Bad weather was encountered over the Irish Sea and, in order to continue visually, he descended from 5000 feet to 800 feet to keep below cloud. As they approached the coast, Harold commenced a climb to avoid the hilly terrain but, despite both engines running normal, the aircraft flew into Eagle Rock, Slieve Donard, Co Down killing 6 of the 7 on board. Only the rear-gunner who was at the back of the aircraft survived.

Also killed were : Flt Lt Hugh Lamour Magee, FO John William Elliott RCAF, Section Officer Barbara Kathleen Blakiston-Houston WAAF, Sgt William Swordy Taylor, Reverend James Dawson Crawford

Harold is buried in the Belfast City Cemetery, Northern Ireland

Harold is commemorated on Wall Panel 186

Photo Source: <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph>