

Sgt Jack Leslie Jury 411764 RNZAF

Jack, known as "Red" to his crew because of his fiery auburn hair, was born on 27 February 1922 in Petone, Wellington, New Zealand, the son of Francis Raymond Jury and Elsie May Jury nee McCarthy.

Educated at the Seddon Memorial Technical College, on leaving school Jack was employed as a glass silverer with Smith & Smith Ltd, Auckland.

In October 1939, Jack volunteered for aircrew duties with the RNZAF, and was called up in March 1941. After initial training in New Zealand, Jack was sent to Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme where, in November 1941, he was awarded his WOp/AG badge.

Jack arrived in the UK in December 1941 and, after advanced training, in July 1942 he was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Feltwell, Norfolk.

On 11 August 1942 Bomber Command were tasked with an op against Mainz, Rhineland-Palatinate Germany. This raid followed the Area Bombing Directive of 5 February 1942 which ordered RAF bombers to attack the German industrial workforce and the morale of the German populace through bombing German cities and their civilian inhabitants.

A combined force of 154 aircraft, with nine 75(NZ) Wellingtons, was allocated to the op. Three squadron crews failed to return.

At 22:15 Jack, operating as the Front Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Feltwell, Norfolk in Wellington III BJ767 (AA-V). Whilst outbound, Jack's aircraft was intercepted by Lt Hans Autenrieth & Uffz Rudolf Adam of the Stab II./NJG1 flying a Bf110 from St Trond Airfield, Belgium.

With the Wellington on fire, the pilot gave the order to jettison the bomb load and bale-out. The crew were unable to release the bombs, but three crew members were able to leave the aircraft safely, although they were to become PoWs. At 01:33, before Jack and the pilot were able to escape, the Wellington exploded above the village of Vaals, Limberg, Netherlands, killing Jack and his captain. This was Jack's 4th op.

Also Killed: Flt Lt Laurence St. George Dobbin RNZAF (Pilot)

Originally buried in Venlo British Cemetery, in August 1947 Jack was moved to Jonkerbos War Cemetery, Nijmegen, Gelderland, Netherlands

Jack is commemorated on Wall Panel 192

Photo Source: www.aucklandmuseum.com

