

Sgt Douglas Malcolm MacKinnon 40923 RNZAF

Douglas was born on 21 November 1920 in Ohinewai, Auckland, New Zealand, the son of John Malcolm MacKinnon and Gertrude Elizabeth Caroline MacKinnon nee Bodmin.

Educated at Helensville District High School and the Huntly District High School, Douglas was employed on his father's farm when, in October 1939, he applied for aircrew duties with the RNZAF.

Called up in April 1940, Douglas completed his training in New Zealand in May 1940 with the award of his Air Gunner's badge.

Arriving in the UK in July 1940, Douglas served on No 1 School of Army Co-Operation and 2 Sqn flying as an Air Gunner on Lysanders, before he was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Feltwell, Norfolk in May 1941.

On 15/16 July 1941 Bomber Command was tasked with an op against individual targets in Duisburg, Germany, a major logistical centre in the Ruhr Area and location of chemical, steel and iron industries. A combined force of 38 Wellingtons, including nine 75(NZ) crews, were allocated to the op.

At 23:00 on 15 July 1941 Douglas, operating as the Rear Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Feltwell in Wellington IC R3171 (AA).

At 03:00 on 16 July Douglas's aircraft was hit by flak, setting the port engine on fire, and the captain attempted a ditching in the North Sea off the Dutch coast. All crew were killed, with only two crew members recovered for burial. This was Douglas's 15th Op.

Also killed: Sgt Robert Ewen Ernest Fotheringham RNZAF (Pilot); Sgt Sydney Allan Dyer RNZAF (WOp/AG); Sgt Eric Vincent Keiran Higgins RAAF (Pilot); Sgt Phillip Edgar Hare RNZAF (WOp/AG); Sgt Joseph Harold Campbell Roberts RCAF (Obs)

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

Douglas is commemorated on Wall Panel 203

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum.com

