PO Arthur McCarthy 411222 RNZAF



Arthur was born on 10 September 1918 in Southsea, Hampshire, the son of Fred Heap McCarthy and Kate Elizabeth McCarthy nee Newns. The family emigrated to New Zealand in 1920 and settled in Auckland. In 1941 he married Margaret Robertson nee Ryan in New Zealand.

Educated at Kowhai Junior School and Seddon Memorial Technical College, Auckland, Arthur was employed as a butcher in Auckland when, in March 1940, he volunteered for service in the RNZAF.

Called up in February 1941, Arthur completed basic aircrew training in New Zealand before transferring to Canada to complete his training under the Empire Air Training Scheme. In October 1941 Arthur was awarded his Air Gunner badge, granted a commission and embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at No. 1 Signals School RAF Cranwell, Lincolnshire, No. 2 Signals School RAF Yatesbury, Wiltshire and 11 OTU RAF Bassingbourn, Hertfordshire, in July 1942 Arthur was posted to 214 Sqn at RAF Stradishall, Suffolk.

On 4/5 September 1942, Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Bremen, Germany, a major military-industrial centre, home to the shipyards of Vulkan, AG Weser and Atlas Werke, the Valentin submarine pens, oil refineries and the aircraft works of Focke-Wulf. A combined force of 251 aircraft, including ten 214 Sqn crews, was allocated to the op.

At 00:04 on 5 September Arthur, operating as one of the Air Gunners, and the crew departed RAF Stradishall in Stirling I BF337 (BU-B).

The target was attacked between 02:10 and 02:25 and the crew turned for home.

At 03:59 near Groningen, Netherlands, Arthur's aircraft was intercepted by Oblt Herbert Lutje, flying a Bf110 of 8./NJG I, operating from Twente Airfield, Overijssel, Netherlands.

Badly damaged, the aircraft exploded at Lichtmis, Rouveen, Overijssel, Netherlands, 10 miles NNE of Zwolle, Overijssel, Netherlands killing Arthur and two other crew members. Four of the crew were able to bale out and were taken as POW.

Also Killed: Sgt Elwyn Meredith (FE); Sgt Iain Menzies Robertson Stewart (WOp/AG)

Arthur is buried in Staphorst (Rouveen) New General Cemetery, Overijssel, Netherlands.

Arthur is commemorated on Wall Panel 207

Photo Source: www.teunispats.nl