

FO Euan Wilfred McLachlan 415266 RNZAF

Euan was born on 10 June 1921 in Leeston, Canterbury, New Zealand, the eldest son of Wallace Lamont McLachlan and Erica Hope McLachlan nee Bartram.

Educated at Ashburton Technical School, Euan was employed as a farm machinery operator and maintenance man for local farmers when, in May 1940, he applied for aircrew service with the RNZAF.

Called up in October 1941, Euan was employed on ground duties until March 1942 when he commenced aircrew training. Following basic aircrew training in New Zealand, in April Euan was sent to Canada to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme. In January 1943 Euan was awarded his WOp/AG badge, granted a commission and embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at 11 OTU at RAF Westcott, Buckinghamshire for multi crew/multi engine conversion on the Wellington, and 1657 HCU at RAF Stradishall, Suffolk where he converted to the Stirling, in January 1944 Euan was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Mepal, Cambridgeshire. Euan undertook fourteen ops on the Stirling before he converted to the Lancaster in March.

On 27/28 April 1944 Bomber Command was tasked with an op to Friederichshafen, a significant industrial hub key to the German war industry, particularly in the production of engines, tank gearboxes, aircraft components and radar development. A combined force of 323 aircraft, including sixteen 75(NZ) Sqn aircraft were allocated to the op.

At 22:05 on 27 April 1944 Euan, operating as the Wireless Operator, and the crew departed RAF Mepal in Lancaster III ND796 (AA-J).

At 01:37 on 28 April Euan's aircraft was intercepted by Fw Gunther Bahr flying a Bf 110 of the 3./NJG6. The aircraft crashed NW of the target, 500 metres SE of Langenhard, killing all on board. This was Euan's 15th op.

Also Killed: FO Peter Ernest Chilman (AG); FO Robert Weir Herron RNZAF (Pilot); WO Keith Alfred Smith RNZAF (AG); FS Matthew Roland Henderson RNZAF (Nav); Sgt John William Germing (FE); Sgt Walter Reginald Percival (AB)

Originally buried in Langenhard Cemetery, in August 1948 Euan was moved to Durnbach War Cemetery, Bayern, Germany

Euan is commemorated on Wall Panel 209

Photo Source: 75nzsquadron.wordpress.com

