

Sgt Ernest Trevor Pellow 411776 RNZAF

Ernest was born on 13 January 1918 in Auckland, New Zealand, the eldest son of Ernest Percy Pellow and Amy Elizabeth Pellow nee Millar.

Educated at Onewhero School, Ernest was employed on the family farm in Onewhero when, in 1939, he applied for service in the Civil Reserve of Pilots. Following the declaration of war, in March 1940 Ernest volunteered for aircrew duties with the RNZAF.

Called up in March 1941, following basic training in New Zealand, in April 1941 Ernest was sent to Canada to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme. In October 1941 Ernest was awarded his Air Gunner badge and immediately embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 11 OTU RAF Bassingbourn, Hertfordshire, where he converted to multi crew/ multi engine ops, in July 1942 Ernest was posted to 218 Sqn at RAF Marham, Norfolk where he converted to the Stirling, and the squadron moved to RAF Downham Market, Norfolk the same month.

On 14/15 September 1942 Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Wilhelmshaven, the primary base for the German Navy and the shipyards, docks and industry that supported them. A combined force of 202 aircraft, including six 218 Sqn crews, were allocated to the op.



At 19:55 on 14 September Ernest, operating as the Bomb Aimer, and the crew departed RAF Downham Market, Norfolk, in Stirling I N3725 (HA-D "Dumbo") shown left.

Whilst over the target, the starboard inner engine failed. The crew commenced a return on the three engines; however, on final approach to base, the starboard outer engine lost power and, at 00:55 on 15 September, Ernest's aircraft crashed 1 mile East of Stoke

Ferry, Norfolk, killing six of the crew. The Wireless Operator and the Mid Upper Gunner survived. This was Ernest's 12th op.

Also killed: FO John Clarence Frankcomb RAAF (Pilot); FS Donald Ivor Pearce (Pilot); Sgt Sidney Horace Ives RNZAF (AG); Sgt Valentine Picken (FE); Sgt Ernest Watson (Obs)

Ernest is buried in Marham Cemetery, Norfolk

Ernest is commemorated on Wall Panel 225

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum.com