

Sqn Ldr Boris Romanoff MiD 39150 RAF

Boris was born in 1914 in Russia, the son of Russian born Theodore Romanoff and Evelyn Mary Romanoff nee Cattley.

Educated at Ripley Court Prep School, Woking and Berkhamsted School, Hertfordshire, Boris joined the RAF and was commissioned in 1936, receiving his wings the following year. In 1936 he won the Wakefield Trophy Gold Medal for Boxing.

By 1938 Boris was serving with 24 (Communications) Sqn. Following the outbreak of war, the squadron acquired civilian airliners which were impressed for wartime service. The squadron provided a detachment in France to run courier services where Boris served until the withdrawal of troops where the squadron was used to evacuate personnel.

In 1940, after returning from France, Boris transferred to the Paratroop Training Sqn at RAF Ringway, Manchester, where he spent 18 months flying Witleys dropping trainee parachute troops over Tatton Park, Cheshire.

Promoted to Sqn Ldr in December 1941, Boris was posted to 138 Sqn at RAF Stradishall on 1 March 1942, just 9 days before his death.

At 00:06 on 10 March 1942, Boris and the crew departed RAF Stradishall in Whitley V Z9125 (NF-A) on Operation Frensham I, which was a supply drop to the French resistance.

The aircraft failed to gain height and crashed at the end of the runway. Rescuers managed to save the rear gunner before the aircraft exploded, killing the rest of the crew.

Also killed : FO Vaclav Jelinek (Observer); Sgt Ladislav Fornůsek (WOp/AG); Sgt Jan Janek (Pilot); Sgt Maximilian Politzer (Observer)

Boris was cremated at Hendon Crematorium, London

Boris is commemorated on Wall Panel 235