LAC Horace Dean Simonsen 438024 RNZAF



Horace, known as Dean, was born on 1 November 1909 in Havelock, Marlborough, New Zealand, the son of Rasmus Neil Simonsen and Lily Martha Simonsen nee Rush.

Educated at Wellington Technical College, Horace was employed by the Wellington Electricity Department.

Horace served with the Territorials, first with the 15th Battery of the Nelson Marlborough Mounted Rifles, and later with a RNZAF Territorial squadron as a Wireless Operator. On the outbreak of war, Horace was mobilised with the General Reconnaissance Squadron at Rongotai, moving to Marlborough on 6 September 1939.

In March 1940, on completion of his Wireless Operator training, Horace was posted to 2 Flying Training School at Blenheim until he was transferred to the UK in September 1940.

In November 1940 Horace was posted to 18 Sqn at RAF Massingham, Norfolk where he served until arriving on 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Feltwell, Norfolk in February 1941 to continue his work-up training. In April 1941 Horace was sent on an Air Gunner's Course, the final stage before becoming operational.

On the night of 16/17 April 1941, Horace was spending some free time in London. Unfortunately, this night was to see one of the heaviest attacks made on London since the war began. Bombing commenced at 20:50 and lasted until 05:18 - 685 bombers attacked the city.

Approximately 66 boroughs were affected, the main bombing being on Central and Southern London. In addition to high explosive and incendiary bombs, a large number of 1,000kg parachute mines were also dropped causing massive damage through blast and fire.

Horace was one of the 1,179 killed that night.

Horace is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey

Horace is commemorated on Wall Panel 241

Photo Source: www.aucklandmuseum.com