

PO Kenneth John Simpson 413675 RAAF

Kenneth was born on 11 May 1921 in Manly, New South Wales, Australia, the son of John Simpson and Violet Ann Ellen Simpson nee Payne.

Educated at Manly High School, Douglas was employed as a clerk by the T & G Mutual Life Society, Sydney when, in April 1941, he volunteered for service in the RAAF.

Called up in September 1941, following basic flying training in Australia, in May 1942 Kenneth was sent to Canada to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme. In October 1942 Kenneth completed his pilot training with the award of his Wings, and in November 1942 he embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 14 (P) Advanced Flying Unit RAF Ossington, Northamptonshire, 12 OTU RAF Chipping Warden, Oxfordshire and 1657 HCU RAF Stradishall, Suffolk, in August 1943 Kenneth was granted a commission and posted to 214 Sqn at RAF Chedburgh, Suffolk.



On the night of 31 August/1 September 1943 Bomber Command was tasked with an operation against Berlin. A combined force of 622 aircraft were allocated to the op, including eleven 214 Sqn crews. Three squadron crews failed to return.

At 20:28 on 31 August Kenneth and his crew departed RAF Chedburgh in Stirling III EE970 (BU-B).

Whilst over Berlin, Kenneth's aircraft was hit by flak and caught fire. As the aircraft started to go down, he ordered the crew to bale out. Kenneth was unable to escape the aircraft, and was killed when the Stirling crashed at Charlottenfelde, Brandenburg, Germany. Post war, the area was in the Soviet Sector, and the RAF was unable to trace the burial place of Kenneth.

Also killed: FS Douglas Conway Houghton RAAF (AG)

Kenneth has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey

Kenneth is commemorated on Wall Panel 242

Photo Source: 214squadron.org.uk