

FS Michael Bertram St. Louis R/69204 RCAF

Michael was born on 11 December 1914 in Eganville, Ontario, Canada, the son of Michael Octave St. Louis and Esther Emma St. Louis nee St. Louis.

Educated at St Brigids School, Michael was employed as a timber mill worker and farm labourer when, in August 1940, he applied for service with the RCAF.

Called up October 1940 for ground duties, Michael re-mustered as Air Gunner and was awarded his badge in January 1942

Transferring to the UK in February 1942, Michael re-mustered as WOp/AG and completed his Wireless Operator training in the UK before moving to advanced training at 22 OTU, RAF Wellesbourne Mountford, Warwickshire. In August 1942 Michael was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk after spending one month with 101 Sqn.

On the night of the 10/11 September 1942, 479 aircraft were dispatched for an attack on Dusseldorf. Thirteen 75(NZ) Sqn Wellingtons participated in the raid.

Shortly after 21:00 on 10 September Michael, operating as the WOp/AG, and the crew departed RAF Mildenhall in Wellington III BJ968 (AA-W) named "Rosaline". Homeward-bound, the aircraft vanished into the North Sea, possibly shot down by a Ju 88 of III./NJG 2 based at Gilze-Rijen, Netherlands, killing all on board.

The op was considered a success, with the city hit in all areas other than the North. The industrial area was heavily damaged, limiting production for a considerable time; however, the raid took its toll on Bomber Command with 33 aircraft lost, 60 crew killed and 13 taken POW. Three 75(NZ) Sqn aircraft failed to return with the loss of 15 men.

Also Killed: PO Randolph Cruickshank Smart RNZAF (Obs); FS Frank Burrill RCAF (Pilot); FS Ralph Ernest Gorman RCAF (AG); FS William Henry Wilfred Lavers RCAF (Obs)

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

Michael is commemorated on Wall Panel 246

Photo Source: www.veterans.gc.ca

