

Sgt Leslie John Symonds 932163 RAFVR

Leslie, known as John, was born on 5 March 1910 in Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, the son of John Symonds and Julia Symonds nee Freeman.

Before joining the RAF and training as an Air Gunner, Leslie was employed as a salesman in the steel industry, which included travel overseas.

At the beginning of May 1942 Leslie was posted to 101 Sqn at RAF Bourne, Cambridgeshire.

On the night of 8/9 July 1942 Bomber Command were tasked with an attack on Wilhelmshaven, a key naval base for the German Navy, and of a combined force of 285 aircraft 101 Sqn contributed eight crews.

Just before midnight on 8 July Leslie, operating as the Rear Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Bourn, Cambridgeshire, in Wellington III X3634 (SR-T).

At 01:40 on 9 July whilst over the target area, Leslie's aircraft was hit by 1. Luftsperr-Abteilung 206 (o) and the Marine-Flak-Abteilung 232 Battery Sande and crashed into the Innenjade, a body of water near Wilhelmshaven, killing all on board.

Also Killed: PO James Richard Tregea (Pilot); Sgt Charles Henry Stewart (AG); Sgt Alexander Albert Brace (WOp/AG); Sgt Hugh Cuthbert Craig (Obs)

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

Leslie is commemorated on Wall Panel 250