

Sgt Victor Arthur Tunbridge 411788 RNZAF

Victor was born on 19 October 1913 in New Plymouth, Taranaki, New Zealand, the youngest son of Charles George Tunbridge and Ada Matilda Tunbridge nee Muller, husband of Violet Esther Tunbridge.

Educated at New Plymouth Boys' High School and Wellington College, Victor was employed by the Wellington Woollen Company Ltd as a Warehouse Salesman when he applied for aircrew duties with the RNZAF.

Called up in March 1941, after initial training in New Zealand, Victor was sent to Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme where, in October 1941, he was awarded his WOp/AG badge.

Victor was sent to the UK in November and completed his advanced training at 11 OTU RAF Bassingbourn, Hertfordshire. In early August 1942 Victor arrived on 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk.

On 27/28 August 1942, 306 aircraft were dispatched for an attack on Kassel, Hessen, Germany. The city was a high profile target for Bomber Command. Kassel contained both the Fieseler aircraft plant, which built the Bf109 and Fw190, and Henschel armaments works responsible for the production of the Dornier Do17 bombers and Tiger and Panzer tanks. Twelve 75(NZ) Sqn Wellingtons participated in the raid.

On the night of 27 August Victor, operating as the Rear Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Mildenhall in Wellington III BJ708 (AA).

In the early hours of 28 August Victor's aircraft crashed at Melsungen, 21 km S of Kassel, probably as a result of flak damage, killing all on board. This was Victor's 3rd op.

Also killed: Flt Lt Andrew Francis Atterbury Osborn DFC (Pilot); PO Errol Thomas Paterson Dalzell RNZAF (Obs); Sgt Roderick McGregor (Obs); Sgt Denis Patrick Hogan RNZAF (WOp/AG)

Originally buried in Korle Civilian Cemetery, Melsungen, Germany, in May 1947 Victor and the crew were moved to the Hanover War Cemetery, Niedersachsen, Germany

Victor is commemorated on Wall Panel 256