PO Laurence John Braithwaite Waters 411111 RNZAF



Laurence was born on 5 February 1921 in Blenheim, Marlborough, New Zealand, the son of Laurence David Waters and Amy Waters nee Braithwaite.

Educated at Murchison High School, Laurence was employed as a truck driver by the Marlborough Transport Ltd when, in August 1940, he volunteered for service with the RNZAF.

Called up in February 1941, Laurence completed his initial training in New Zealand before transferring for WOp/AG training in Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme in April. In October 1941 Laurence was awarded his WOp/AG badge and granted a commission before he was transferred to the UK the following month.

Following advanced training, in July 1942 Laurence was posted to 226 Sqn at RAF Swanton Morley, Norfolk.

On 13 August 1942, thirteen 226 Sqn aircraft detached to RAF Thruxton, Hampshire, to prepare for Operation Jubilee, the doomed raid on Dieppe. On 19 August 1942, 226 Sqn made 27 sorties in support of the raid. Laurence's op, the 2nd of four 226 Sqn ops, was to lay a smoke screen over the Hindenburg Battery at Dieppe.

At 10:15 Laurence, operating as the WOp/AG, departed RAF Thruxton in Boston III AL710 (MQ-Z).

An effective screen was laid for a distance of 1 - 1.5 miles; however, considerable flak was encountered during the operation and, whilst over the target area, Laurence was killed and the Observer was wounded. The pilot was able to return the damaged aircraft to the UK, crash landing at RAF Gatwick, Surrey. This was Laurence's first op.

Laurence is buried in St Bartholomew's Churchyard, Horley, Surrey

Laurence is commemorated on Wall Panel 260

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum