FS Noel Breward 421668 RNZAF



Noel was born on 20 December 1914 in Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand, the son of Harry Breward and Clara Breward nee Cooke.

Educated at Christchurch West High School and Christchurch Technical College, Noel was employed as a farm manager in Christchurch when, in April 1941, he applied for aircrew service in the RNZAF.

Called up in March 1942, Noel commenced pilot training in New Zealand; however, when his training was terminated, in August 1942 he re-mustered as Observer and was sent to Canada to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme. In March 1943 Noel was awarded his Observer badge and immediately embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 62 OTU RAF Usworth, Durham, and 54 OTU RAF Winfield, Berwick on Tweed, in September 1943 Noel was posted to 488 Sqn at RAF Bradwell Bay, Essex.

At 22:00 on 30 December 1943, Noel and his Pilot departed RAF Bradwell Bay in Mosquito XIII HK375 (ME-) on a Ground Controlled Interception exercise.

At 22:10, Noel's aircraft passed over the airfield at 2000 feet heading west. The aircraft appeared to be slowly losing height and it was reported that the Mosquito was showing a red navigation light; however, this may have been an engine fire. Shortly afterwards, the Mosquito crashed into the sea 8 miles SE of the airfield. The aircraft was seen to be burning for about 12 seconds before it exploded. No wreckage or crew was ever recovered.

Also killed: FS Ernest Henry Behrent RNZAF (Pilot)

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

Noel is commemorated on Wall Panel - NYE

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum.com