PO Anthony Harold Bailey 417146 RNZAF



Anthony was born on 15 March 1922 in Onehunga, Auckland, New Zealand, the son of Charles James Bailey and Maud Constance Bailey nee Robson.

Educated at Otaua and Maioro Schools, Waiuku, Anthony was employed as a farmhand in Pakuranga when, in January 1941, he applied for aircrew service in the RNZAF.

Called up in December 1941, Anthony completed his pilot training in New Zealand in November 1942 with the award of his Wings, and he embarked for the UK in January 1943.

Following advanced training at 7 (P) Advanced Flying Unit, RAF Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, 59 OTU, RAF Milfield, Northumberland and tactical training, in May 1944 Anthony was posted to 83 Group Support Unit at RAF Cranfield, Bedfordshire. This formation formed part of the Allied Air Forces supporting the liberating forces for the invasion of Europe.

In July 1944 Anthony was posted to 486 (NZ) Sqn at RAF Newchurch, Kent where the squadron was providing cover for the advancing forces in Normandy. In September 1944 the squadron moved to B60 Grimbergen, Belgium and then to B80 at Volkel, Netherlands the following month, where it carried out armed reconnaissance sorties and close air support operations. Anthony was granted a commission in January 1945.

At 17:20 on 26 March 1945 Anthony departed Volkel, together with seven other squadron aircraft, in Tempest V NV932 (SA-U) on an armed reconnaissance of the area Bielefeld - Hildersheim - Northeim - Warburg - Hamm.

Hit by light flak over Gutersloh, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Anthony radioed he was returning to base; however, when near the Rhine the engine failed and he managed to glide his aircraft across the river and attempted a crash landing 3 miles south of Xanten, Nordrhein-Westfalen in allied held territory. Anthony's aircraft hit a stone building and, although he was extricated soon after the crash, he died in the ambulance en-route to the hospital. This was Anthony's 73rd op.

Originally buried in an isolated farmer's field, 30 yards east of the hospital at Kapellen, Germany, in July 1947 Anthony was moved to Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany.

Anthony is commemorated on Wall Panel – Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum.com