

AUSTRALIAN AVIATORS OF 77 SQUADRON



In the early hours of the 8th June 1944, Halifax MZ701 lifted from the ground at RAF Full Sutton to perform a night training exercise. Together with three members of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve on board that morning were four Australians, all members of 77 Squadron.

As the Halifax slowly and steadily climbed away from the base, the Halifax suffered an engine failure which consequently led to the instruments also failing. Fighting to maintain control of the plane Pilot Hyde of the RAAF quickly lost control of the doomed aircraft which crashed not far from the airfield at nearby Elvington. The plane came down to the north of Elvington village, plunging into one of the W.A.A.F living quarters. With staff from Elvington on the ground close by to attempt a rescue of the possible casualties following the crash, it appears that only one of the seven-man crew – Flight Engineer Sargeant Harry Fox of the RAFVR who was aged 20, survived the tragic crash. Those Australians from 77 Squadron who lost their lives that day were...

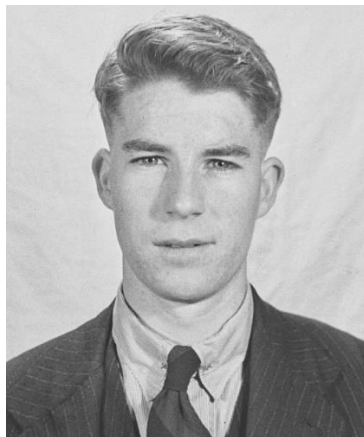


Virtual War Memorial Australia

Pilot – Pilot Officer 422187 Gordon Leslie Hyde

Born on the 5th June 1917 at Marrickville in New South Wales Australia, to parents William and Emily. Gordon's elder brother William was born in 1910 and his younger sister Beryl was born in 1921. Moving to live in Petersham, Gordon worked as an Engraver and enlisted for the RAAF on ANZAC day (25th April) 1942. where he underwent training as a pilot and received his flying badge on the 5th March 1943. He embarked from Brisbane to the United Kingdom where he underwent further training before eventually being assigned to 77 Squadron on the 23rd May 1944. Unfortunately, Gordon

didn't survive the average six weeks life span once assigned to squadron. He survived just two weeks and died was killed three days after his 27th birthday.



Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Flight Sergeant 418382 Kevin Francis Galvin

Born in Unley Park South Australia on the 25th May 1923, Kevin grew up in Thornbury, Darebin in Victoria with his parents John and Grace. Before moving to St. Kevin's College in Toorak, Kevin first attended St. Thomas College where he began his secondary education and was only a couple of days shy of his 19th birthday when he enlisted at the Recruiting Centre in Melbourne. Four weeks after embarking from Brisbane and trained as a Wireless Operator and Air Gunner, Kevin arrived in the UK on 7th July 1943 and underwent further training in accordance with the Royal Air Force.

Promoted to Flight Sergeant on 4 March 1944, Kevin had already met up with fellow Australian and Pilot Gordon Hyde at the Operational Training Unit where crews were formed. Kevin was also assigned to 77 Squadron on 24 May 1944. In the early hours of the 8th June 1944 when the Halifax crashed, Kevin had only two weeks previously celebrated his 21st birthday.





Air Gunner Flight Sergeant 432211 John Duncan Krone

John was the Air Gunner aboard the ill-fated Halifax MZ701 that listed off from RAF Full Sutton in the early hours of the 8th June 1944.

Only 19 years old when he died, John was born in Peakhurst, New South Wales, Australia. His parents Stanley and Isabel welcomed their second son into the world on 28th July 1924. Their first child, Henry was born in Tasmania on 26th May 1928, before the young family moved to Peakhurst.

When it was time for John to be involved in the war in Europe, he enlisted with the Royal Australian Air Force in Sydney, before embarkation to England where he conducted further training to become an Air Gunner. Although John initially survived the crash, he later died in York Military Hospital of fatal injuries on the 8th June 1944.

Sadly, just three months earlier, his older brother Bomb Aimer Henry Krone had also lost his life as a crew member when Lancaster ND392 was lost on an operational mission over Stuttgart. It is documented that no trace of the Lancaster or the crew was ever found. Stanley and Isabel had lost both sons. John was 19 years old and Henry was 25.



Rear Gunner Flight Sergeant 429663 Aidan Jordon

Aidan was born in County Durham, England. His parents William and Annie decided to emigrate when Aidan was a lad, settling in Perth, Western Australia. Born on the 5th September 1924, Aidan was only 18 years old when he enlisted for the Royal Australian Air Force on the 16th October 1942 at No.4 Recruiting Centre in Perth. This choice would have come as no surprise to Aidan's parents as he was in fact an Air Cadet during his time at the Christian Brothers College at Kalgoorlie. He later went on to train at the School of Mines, working briefly for the Gold Mining Paranga Exploration Company.

Having joined the Royal Australian Air Force, Aidan underwent training in Bombing and Gunnery before embarking from Melbourne on the 27th September 1943. In England he carried out further training before being promoted to Flight Sergeant and eventually meeting the rest of his crew and a final posting to 77 Squadron at RAF Full Sutton.

Aidan was the youngest RAAF crew member to die whilst assigned to Bomber Command. On the 8th June, he was just and, as with the rest of the crew, their life expectancy had been cut from just six weeks to two weeks.

Aidan was Catholic by religion and was buried in Stonefall on the 13th June at 10 o'clock in the morning. Records show that a Roman Catholic Chaplain conducted the service before he was laid to rest. The others were buried on the same day.

Air Gunner Flight Sergeant 432211 John Duncan Krone

Laid to rest in Section B Row E Grave 15
REST IN PEACE. LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON HIM O LORD



Rear Gunner Flight Sergeant 429663 Aidan Jordon

Laid to rest in Section B Row E Grave 16
HAPPY IN LIFE, FEARLESS IN DEATH, ONE OF NATURE'S GENTLEMEN



**Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Flight Sergeant
418382 Kevin Francis Galvin**

Laid to rest in Section B Row E Grave 17
GREAT LOVE HATH NO MAN



Pilot – Pilot Officer 422187 Gordon Leslie Hyde

Laid to rest in Section B Row E Grave 18
HIS DUTY NOBLY DONE



Rear Gunner Flight Sergeant 425154 Nicholas Charles Grob

Nicholas was a Queensland boy, born in Rockhampton on the 20th November 1919 to parents Edward and Maria Grob who had originally hailed from Yeppon in Queensland. Brought up on farming land, Nicholas followed in his parents' footsteps and became a dairy farmer. Following his enlistment in Brisbane in January 1942, he trained as Wireless Operator and Gunner, embarking for England in March 1943 to complete training. Nicholas was assigned to 77 Squadron in September 1943 but was sadly killed on the 9th December.

Nicholas was the Rear Gunner on Halifax LL122 when it left RAF Elvington to conduct a routine training exercise to simulate attack by enemy aircraft. During this exercise a malfunction appeared on board and the plane spun out of control crashing near Leavening close to York. The 'attacking' Hurricane successfully made two 'attacks' before the Halifax encountered a problem, stalled and dived into the ground. At a reasonable height, two of the crew were able to bale and survived. They were Bomb Aimer Sergeant Rae Simpson of the RNZAF and Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Sergeant James Clark of the RAFVR.

Rear Gunner Flight Sergeant 425154 Nicholas Charles Grob

Laid to rest in Section C Row F Grave 15

HE IS NOT LOST TO LONELY HEARTS BUT ONLY GONE BEFORE

