

STAFFORD, MERVYN

405887

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AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES  
ACCESS STATUS

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## ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

See 460 file end. 258

OFFICERS AND AIRCRAFTMEN.

The following Biographical details are required for use at R.A.A.F. Overseas Headquarters, LONDON.

Surname..... STAFFORD..... Number. 405887.

Christian Names..... M. E. R. V. N.

Air Force Rank and Mustering..... SEAGANT PILOT W/O

Degrees, Decorations, etc..... D.F.C.

Present Appointment and Location..... # 3. P.R.C.

Date of Birth. 16/8/42..... Place MARYBOROUGH, QLD. AUSTR.

Educated... MARYBOROUGH BOYS HIGH SCHOOL  
MARYBOROUGH, QLD. AUSTR.

Date of Entering Service..... 21/6/41

Previous Service Experience..... N.I.C.

Civilian Career and Activities..... MOTOR PRINTER

Clubs, Recreations, etc... HOCKEY... FOOTBALL... CRICKET  
(COLTS) SWIMMING

Father.....

Wife.....

Children.....

Home Address..... H. WARD, QUEENSLAND  
AUST. B.P. L.A.

Signature..... M. Stafford

Date..... 13/5/42

Date embarked (Australia)..... 13/1/41

Destination..... CANADA

Overseas Headquarters,  
Kodak House,  
KINGSWAY, W.C.2.

PRO. FORM. A.  
E/R. 5.

SECRET & CONFIDENTIAL

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Overseas Headquarters. These forms are to be filled in and handed to the  
Adjutant of your unit immediately.

NAME..... STAFFORD Mervyn ..... NUMBER..... 405887.  
(In full)

RANK AND MUSTERING... F/Sgt. Pilot ..... DECORATIONS..... -

NUMBER I.T.S. COURSE..... 16.

X DATE LEFT AUSTRALIA..... 13/11/41.  
CANADA..... 20/1/42.  
~~SPAIN~~

DATE OF ARRIVAL UNITED KINGDOM..... 1.5.42.

O.T.U. - A.F.U. etc.... 15 A.F.U. Leconfield 17 O.T.U. Upwood.....

PRESENT UNIT..... 18 O.T.U. .... AIRCRAFT FLOWN..... Wellington

PREVIOUS UNITS (with dates) AND AIRCRAFT FLOWN..... 15 A.F.U. 17 O.T.U. 107 Sqn.  
Wellington, Blenheim, Boston.

DETAILS OF OPERATIONS (details of operations with dates to be given as fully as possible under the appropriate headings as shown)

- (a) Number Operational Hours (b) Number Operational Sorties, day-night  
(c) Target bombed  
(d) Attacks on enemy surface vessels - type size etc.  
(e) Attacks on enemy submarines (f) Combats with enemy aircraft  
(g) Other attacks and incidents. (h) Other Australians in crew.

(A) 12 hours (b) 3 - day (c) 2 armed raiders at Cherbourg docks.

(g) 2 sea sweeps along Dutch coast.

DATE ~~18~~ 18.7.43.

M. Stafford F/Sgt.

use other side if necessary.



FOR AUSTRALIAN PAPERS3rd December, 1943Air Ministry News ServiceAir Ministry Bulletin No. 12253AUSTRALIANS OVER BERLIN

Three Squadrons of R.A.A.F. working with the R.A.F. took part in last night's battle over Berlin in which over 1500 tons of high explosives and incendiary bombs were dropped, in just over half an hour.

The real struggle began when the bombers were still 50 miles away from the target. The Germans had laid a long lane of fighter flares, which stretched brilliantly up to the capital itself, where the final battle took place.

Part of the area was covered by clouds, but there remained a clear patch of sky made still clearer by the fighter flares, and the scores of searchlights which the enemy had concentrated there. As our bombers flew into it the waiting fighters dived down in an effort to intercept them before they could drop their bombs.

"But they couldn't stop us", an Australian pilot said. "We got through and by the time we left, the gap in the clouds was being filled up by the black smoke from the fires. The smoke alone had reached a height of some 15,000 feet, and some of our fellows could still see the red glow of fires from 200 miles on the way home."

Flying Officer K. McIntyre, of Queensland, who was piloting a Lancaster, said that when he arrived over the capital he found that about half of Berlin was covered by cloud and the other half was clear. "But the clouds were drifting all the time", he continued, "so that the gap was always altering its position. There were great blocks of searchlights - hundreds of them, and whenever the crews managed to get on to one of our aircraft, they hung on to it for all they were worth. The rear gunner saw two aircraft coned while we were over the capital.

"The enemy appeared to be using a type of flak which looks like hose-piping as it comes up. It gives you the impression that it is impossible to get through it - but you do. We had one or two holes in the bomb doors from hits. That was the worst they did to us and we dropped our bombs and turned for home".

Flight Sergeant M. Stafford, another pilot of a Lancaster, who comes from Maryborough, Queensland, said that he could see the target indicators of the Pathfinders very clearly as he made his bombing run through the clouds over the capital. Suddenly the enemy dropped fighter flares across our path, and we went clean through a concentration of them without being attacked by one of the fighters".

Flying Officer J.A. Cameron, of Melbourne said: "Fighter flares were being dropped all over the target area. On the last 50 miles of the target, the Germans were dropping flares all the time in an effort to catch up. The route was brilliantly lit all the way in front of us. We got to Berlin all right, and there it was - an extraordinary sight, with big red fires burning below, hundreds of searchlights, and the brilliant flares coming slowly down from a good height. I put our aircraft into the bombing run, and just as our 4,000 pounder dropped, one of the engines cut. My heart missed a beat too. However, it was all right, and we got back on the others".

Flying Officer R.J. Taylor, a bomb aimer from Brisbane, who last night completed his 58th flight, said that the fires in Berlin were burning strongly as they set course for home. "Smoke was billowing up to the sky, and had reached a height of 15,000 feet".

Pilot Officer K. Schultz of Adelaide, a pilot, said that although he was in the first phase of the attack the fires had got a strong hold by the time he left. "The defences did not seem to have got really going while we were there", he said. "We saw only a few fighter flares, and the ground defences were light. The beams of the searchlights worked effectively when they concentrated on a gap in the sky, but they were hampered when we were using the cloud cover".

Copy of citation of award D.F.C.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS (non-immediate award gazetted August 18, 1944)

Warrant Officer Mervyn STAFFORD (405887) No. 460 (R.A.A.F) Squadron

This airman has completed, in various capacities, many successful operations against the enemy, in which he has displayed high skill, fortitude and devotion to duty.

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3rd December, 1943.

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Air Ministry News Service.

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 12253

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