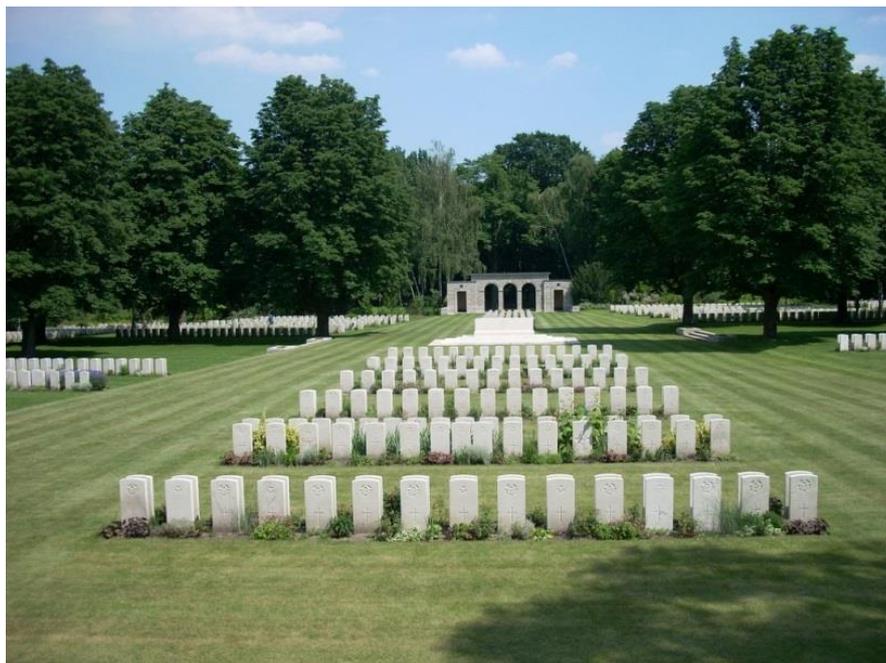




In memory of
Squadron Leader
NOEL WILLIAM WRIGHT
37589, Royal Air Force
who died age 30
on 24 August 1943

Son of William Walgeth Wright and Leila Wright; husband of
Grace MacLean Wright, of Appleby, Westmoreland

Remembered with honour
BERLIN (1939-1945) WAR CEMETERY, GERMANY



SQUADRON LEADER
NOEL WILLIAM WRIGHT
ROYAL AIR FORCE
SERVICE NUMBER: 37589

Squadron Leader Noel William Wright was the Pilot and Captain of a No. 77 Squadron Royal Air Force Halifax Bomber JD 465 at Royal Air Force Station Elvington that was lost during bombing operations at Berlin, Germany, on night of 23rd/24th August 1943. He had enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force in 1935 and later transferred to the Royal Air Force. He married whilst stationed with the Royal Air Force at Hong Kong. Prior to enlisting in the Royal Australian Air Force, he was a founding member of the 2nd Toowoomba Boy Scouts. His personal file is not held by the National Australian Archives nor does he appear on the Department of Veterans' Affairs World War 2 Nominal Roll however, his service in the Royal Australian Air Force and Royal Air Force is explained in the following newspaper report:

Dalby Herald. Tuesday 28th September 1943. SQUADRON LEADER N.W. WRIGHT. Squadron Leader Noel William Wright, R.A.A.F., Son of Mr and the late Mrs W. Wright, "Milray," Jandowae, has been posted as missing. This advice has been received by relatives here, from his wife who is residing in England. Squadron Leader Wright joined the R.A.A.F. in 1936 at the age of 19 years and, after training at Point Cook, went to England as a Pilot Officer in 1937. From there, where he was promoted to the rank of Flight Lieutenant, he went, to Hong Kong, and there was aide-de-camp to the Governor, advancing to the rank of Squadron Leader. Whilst in Hong Kong he was married to Miss Grace Swan, and at the outbreak of hostilities with Japan his wife and her mother were amongst those evacuated to Australia, where they resided for some time with Mr and Mrs A. Hoskin. Squadron Leader Wright was transferred to Singapore and when the Jap invasion took place escaped to Java, and narrowly avoided disaster there, the airfield being machine-gunned by the Japs as the R.A.A.F. personnel raced for their planes. India was his next stopping place, and from there he went to England, where, he was engaged in making raids over enemy territory. It was from a raid over Berlin on August 23rd that he failed to return. Mrs Wright, who had given birth to a son during her stay in Queensland sailed for Singapore when her husband was transferred there, and, was residing there at the time of the first Japanese bombing of the city. At a minute's notice, with no time to pack any belongings, Mrs Wright boarded a ship for West Australia when the Invasion of Singapore took place, and from there returned to Jandowae. Later with her mother, she lived for a time in Melbourne, but, anxious to be with her husband, who was now in England, she braved the seas once more with her little son, leaving her mother in Melbourne with another of her daughters. Mrs Wright's terrifying experiences were not yet over for the ship was torpedoed, but she and her baby were amongst those fortunate, enough to be rescued. In a lifeboat Mrs Wright went through the terrible ordeal of watching the child who had been her son's constant playmate, and his father and mother, drown. Eventually she and her little boy arrived safely in England about 12 months before her husband's last flight. Mrs Wright's father and brother are prisoners in Hong Kong, and another, brother was killed there. The missing airman was well known in Jandowae, having attended the State School here for a number of years, after which he went to live with Mr and Mrs A. Hoskin at Motley (near Oakey). Mr Hoskin, who is a cousin of Squadron Leader Wright, was head teacher there, and under his tuition the lad passed his scholarship, after which he attended the Toowoomba Grammar School and was successful in passing his Junior and Senior University examinations, finally joining the R.A.A.F.

The following report appeared in the *Courier Mail* on 19th August 1940:

“Twelve more evacuees from Hong Kong have arrived in Brisbane. They were brought by the fifth evacuee ship to call here. Most of the women in the ship went on to Sydney and Melbourne. They had been told in Manila that Brisbane was not healthy for children. Mrs Noel Wright, the young Scotch bride of a west Queensland airman in the Royal Air Force, arrived to stay with her husband’s parents, Mr and Mrs W.W. Wright, Milrai, Jandowae. She was accompanied by her mother, Mrs H. Swan, and nine-year old sister, Fay.”

The following report appeared in the *Courier Mail* on 19th March 1941:

“PERSONAL – Flight Lieutenant N.W. Wright, who is serving with the Royal Air Force abroad, had been promoted to the rank of Squadron Leader, according to a cablegram received by his wife at Southport. Squadron Leader Wright is a native of Jandowae, where his father, Mr W.A. Wright, lives. He was educated at the Toowoomba Grammar School, and joined the Royal Australian Air Force in 1935, later transferring to the Royal Air Force.”

The Casualty Section of the R.A.A.F. sent the following letter to Noel Wright’s father, residing at Jandowae via Dalby:

Dear Sir, This letter is to confirm the telegram from this Department dated the 27th August 1943, informing you that your son, Squadron Leader Noel William Wright, is missing as a result of air operations on the night of the 23rd/24th August 1943. The details available at present in this Department are that your son was a member of the crew of a Halifax aircraft which was lost whilst on an operational flight on the date mentioned above. It is regretted thjat the circumstances surrounding the loss of the aircraft are not known at present, but it is presumed to have been due to enemy action over Berlin, the target which it was detailed to attack. Immediately further information is received, you will be notified accordingly. Permit me to extend to you the sincere sympathy of this Department in the anxiety you are suffering, and I trust that the enclosed leaflet will be of assistance to you. Yours faithfully, M.C. Langslow, Secretary.



Halifax Bomber in flight.



77 Squadron aircrew about to take off on another big raid.

Toowoomba Grammar School archive records show that he enrolled as a boarder on 4th July 1929 and he left the School on 9th December 1932. His parent was shown as Mr W.W. Wright of Jandowae. He passed the Junior examination in eight subjects and was a Platoon Sergeant in the School's Cadet Unit. He also played 1st XV Rugby.

External links:

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[RAAF Casualty Report](#)