

Barrow, Richard Trathen

Age: 29
Nationality: Australian
Rank: Sergeant
Unit: No. 32 OTU
Occupation: Wireless
Operator/
Air Gunner
Service No: 421129 (RAAF)



Birth: 13 April 1913
Junee, NSW, Australia

Home Town: Sydney, NSW, Australia

Death: 13 April 1943
Crash of Handley Page Hampden AN121
Cowichan Head, B.C., Canada

Burial: Royal Oak Burial Park, Victoria, B.C., Canada

Others: P/O J.S Peterkin, Pilot (RAFVR); Sgt. R.T. Barrow,
Navigator (RAAF); Sgt. D.D. MacGillivray, WAG (RCAF);
Sgt. K.E. Thompson, WAG (RCAF).

Biography

In 1940, when he applied to join the Royal Australian Air Force, Richard Barrow was a clerk for the Maritime Services Board in Sydney, NSW. A tall, slender (6'2"/144lbs) 26 year old, he was married with one small child.

In April 1942, shortly after the birth of a second child, Richard began training for aircrew. He remained in Australia for the remainder of 1942, training as a wireless operator/air gunner and as an observer. He was awarded his Observer Badge and was posted to Canada for further training as navigator.

On 11 December 1942 Richard embarked on a ship taking him to Patricia Bay RCAF station in British Columbia, where he joined No. 32 OTU.

Four months later, on 13 April 1943, a year after he was posted to aircrew, Richard was WAG on Handley Page Hampden AN121 when it crashed into the water off Cowichan Head, Vancouver Island. He was killed instantly on what was only his second flight with the unit.

Richard Barrow was born in Junee, NSW, Australia, on 23 July 1913. Junee is about 150 km west of Canberra. He was the only child of Lionel and Margaret Barrow and was married to Ethel Annie. He had two small daughters, Margaret Annie, four, and Rosemarie Jean, 12 months. He was buried in the Commonwealth War Graves area in Royal Oak Burial Park, Victoria, B.C., Canada.



Details of Crash

On 13 April 1943, Handley Page Hampden AN 121 took off at 1:15 pm with a crew of four:

P/O J.S Peterkin	Pilot (RAFVR)
Sgt. R.T. Barrow	Navigator (RAAF)
Sgt. D.D. MacGillivray	WAG (RCAF)
Sgt. K.E. Thompson	WAG (RCAF)

P/O Peterkin had 26 hours piloting Hampdens and 209 hours on other aircraft.

The flight was to perform Navigational exercises followed by bombing practice at the bombing range at Cowichan Head, B.C.

The bombing was to be at a height of 50' and aircrew were told to be careful of other aircraft when at a low height, where they did not have normal manoeuvrability.

At about 2:30 pm, after completing the navigational exercises the aircraft entered the Cowichan Head range. The pilot made two runs at 20' to 30' dropping two bombs on each run. Personnel of the Armament Section at the range reported that soon after passing over the target the aircraft went into a climbing turn to port, turned approximately 180° attaining a height of 100' and then went into a vertical bank, lost speed, stalled and plunged into the water nose down. There was no explosion but the aircraft sank leaving a dinghy floating. The safety boat pulled Sgt. Thompson, the only survivor, from the water, Sgt. Barrow, who had been killed instantly, and P/O Peterkin, who died later. The body of Sgt. MacGillivray was later recovered from the wreckage.

The Court of Inquiry concluded that this was a straightforward case of an inexperienced pilot doing a climbing turn and made no recommendations.



Handley Page Hampden

