

203 Squadron disaster of 1942

<http://www.aircrewremembered.com/lewis-william-radcliffe.html>

22nd June 1942 (Monday)

203 Squadron (motto: Occidens oriensque - 'West and east') 235 Wing. 201 Group

Base: LG.39 Burg El Arab South, Egypt

#### REASON FOR LOSS:

The squadron organised a swimming party at a beach close to the base. The boys found a metal 'float' that they decided to take back to the base in the truck that collected them.

The 'float' was later identified as a German explosive sweep cutter. As they entered the camp the device exploded, killing several and injuring others.

#### Burial details:

P/O. David John Bushel 115335 RAF Age 25. El Alamein War Cemetery. Collective. Grave XXIV. E. 1-2. Son of Francis William Bushell, and of Maggie Bushell. of Gloucester. Grave inscription: 'Resting Where No Shadows Fall In Perfect Peace He Awaits Us All. Mother'.

W/O. Frederick Charles Cookman. Aus/404199 RAAF Age 27. El Alamein War Cemetery. Collective. grave XXIV. E. 1-2. Son of Frederick Charles and Emily Jane Cookman, of Woolloowin, Queensland, Australia. Grave inscription: 'By Their Deeds Ye Shall Know Them. Rest In Peace'.

P/O. Michael George Lonsdale Hornby. 107952 RAF Age 24. El Alamein War Cemetery. Collective. grave XXIV. E. 1-2. Son of Albert Henry and Esme Georgina Hornby, of North Kilworth, Leicestershire. Grave inscription: 'At The Going Down Of The Sun And In The Morning We Will Remember Them'.

W/O. William George Lee. Aus/406131 RAAF Age 20. El Alamein War Cemetery. Grave AIV.E.15. Son of George and Jean Eleanor Lee, of East Perth, Western Australia. Grave inscription: 'His Duty Gallantly And Nobly Done. So Dearly Loved'.

P/O. Robert Douglas Lewis DFM. 47580 RAF Age 25. Collective. grave XXIV. E. 1-2. Son of Robert Stonhewer Lewis and Alice Williams Lewis, of Auckland City, New Zealand. Grave inscription: 'Love Conquers All Things'. His brother

also lost his life on the 25th August 1944.

Fl/Lt. George Sumner Stead. 70644 RAF Age 33. Collective. grave XXIV. E. 1-2. Son of Charles Clement Stead and Adelaide Mary Stead and husband of E. Margaret H. Stead, of Iver, Buckinghamshire. M.A. (Cantab.). Grave inscription: ' Greater Love Hath No Man Than This, That A Man Lay Down His Life For His Friends'.

F/O. Richard Ronald Thomson. Aus/402080 RAAF Age 25. Alexandria (Hadra) War Memorial Cemetery. Grave 1.H.25. Son of Dr. Ronald Magimie Thomson and Noeline Thomson, of Ashfield, New South Wales, Australia.

Survived:

Fl/Lt. Alan Lloyd Fox Aus/406001 RAAF Seriously injured, Admitted to hospital. Born on the 12th July 1912 at Perth. Left the RAAF on the 8th November 1945.

Sgt. Bernard Murray Heffernan Aus/12390 RAAF Slightly injured. Born on the 09th March 1913 at Mount Victoria. Left the RAAF on the 21st November 1945

P/O. O G Hopkins 107923 RAFVR Slightly injured.

Researched and dedicated to the relatives of these servicemen with thanks to Jenifer Lemaire and to the extensive research by Errol Martyn and his publications: "For Your Tomorrow Vols. 1-3", Auckland Library Heritage Collection, AWMM, Weekly News of New Zealand, other sources as quoted below:

<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com>