

SERGEANT ROBERT LOUIS ANDREW MCFARLAND

Robert McFarland was born at Auckland on 8 August 1922 and received his secondary education at Sacred Heart College, Auckland where he reached University Entrance standard. He afterwards continued his studies at Auckland University College. He was interested in football and cricket, baseball and swimming. After leaving school he was employed by the Government as a clerical cadet and at the time of applying for enlistment in aircrew, on 22 June 1940, was in the employ of the Social Security Department at Auckland.

Sergeant McFarland was enlisted at the Initial Training Wing, Levin on 2 March 1941 and posted to No 4 Elementary Flying Training School, Whenuapai on 13 April for his elementary flying training. Here, on 3 June, his pilot training was terminated, and he was remustered to air observer and reposted to Levin early in August for his initial training in this trade. He embarked for Canada on 22 September 1941 under the Empire Air Training Scheme.

Sergeant McFarland arrived in Canada early in October and was posted on 11 October to No 6 Air Observers' School, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan and thence on 17 January 1942 to No 5 Bombing and Gunnery School, Dafoe, Saskatchewan, where on 28 February 1942 he was awarded his air observers' badge and promoted to the rank of Sergeant. He attended a course at No 1 Air Navigation School, Rivers, Manitoba during March and was remustered to navigator. On 15 April he proceeded to No 1 "Y" Depot, Halifax, Nova Scotia for embarkation to the United Kingdom.

Sergeant McFarland arrived at No 3 Personnel Reception Centre, Bournemouth, early in May and was posted to No 2 Advanced Flying Unit, Millom, Cumberland on 15 June and thence, on 21 July, to No 1 Operational Training Unit at

/Bassingbourn,

Bassingbourn, Hertsfordshire. Here he crewed up and completed his training on Wellington bomber aircraft before being posted on 22 October to No 115 Squadron at Mildenhall, Suffolk. From this base, as navigator of Wellington aircraft, he took part in three operational flights.

Sergeant McFarland was a member of the crew of a Wellington bomber which took off on the night of 24/25 October 1942 on an operational flight over enemy territory and which failed to return to its base. All the members of the crew, including Sergeant McFarland, were reported missing. Later information was received from a German source through the International Red Cross Committee that the body of Sergeant McFarland had been washed ashore, but no burial place was indicated. In consequence, he was reclassified to missing, believed killed in action. In due course his death was officially presumed to have occurred on 25 October 1942. Later the IRCC reported that Sergeant McFarland was buried in the Military Cemetery at Haamstede, Schouwen, Zeeland, Holland.

He was later re-interred in Bergen-Op-Zoom Cemetery, Plot 20, Row A, Grave 2.

Sergeant McFarland had 256 flying hours as a navigator.

**SERGEANT OBSERVER ROBERT
LOUIS McFARLAND**

Robert McFarland was at SHC from 1937-39. He was prominent in sporting activities and won the Intermediate Diving Championship and the Senior Marathon in 1939. During his time in the Air Force he was chosen as one of their swimming representatives in the Services' sports at Palmerston North. He joined the RNZAF in March 1941 and left for Canada in September of that year after completing his training as an observer. He was only 18 years of age at the time of his enlistment.



SERGEANT-OBSERVER ROBERT LOUIS McFARLAND

On reaching England he was posted to a bomber squadron and during the days before he was lost was on bombing raids over Germany on six consecutive nights. On the seventh night his plane took part in a very heavy raid over Milan and was one of seven that failed to return. It seems that his plane crashed while returning from this raid on the 24th October 1942. R.I.P.

(He is buried at Bergen op Zoom, Holland near where his plane probably crashed.)

**FLIGHT LIEUTENANT JOHN TREVOR
McGREAL D.F.C**

Trevor McGreal was at SHC from 1926-28. After leaving College he went into the motoring business. He was one of the most loyal old boys of the College and a familiar figure at Old Boy functions. He was married in August 1941 and shortly afterwards joined the RNZAF and entered the Air Force Base at Levin. From there he went to England where he gained his commission and was appointed a flying instructor at an RAF station. Later on he was attached to the famed Pathfinder Squadron 109 of the R.A.F. and at the time of his death had completed nearly fifty missions.



He lost his life in a raid just ten days before the end of the war in Europe and is buried in the Municipal Cemetery in Brussels. Apparently he had volunteered to take the place of another pilot who was ill and unable to go on this raid. Trevor was an exemplary Catholic and his engaging personality made him popular with all ranks. One of his chief pleasures was to serve Mass wherever he was. He was at Mass and received Holy Communion in the evening before he set out on his last flight. We offer our sympathy to his wife, young daughter, parents and relatives. R.I.P.