

Commune Head of Opatowiec & Social Committee Commemorate? "Fallen Airmen RAF & SAAF crash B24J Liberator EW-250" L "on 16 October 1944".

Everyone is invited to participate in the ceremonial unveiling of the airmen's monument:
34th Squadron of the Second Wing of the SAAF South African Air Force,
205 RAF Bomb Group. Liberator EW-250 „ L ”,
who died in clash with the German night fighters

The monument is a gratitude to the local community for the highest sacrifice that is life,
which has been associated with the history of Polish history. For eternal glory and memory.

14 October 2018 . Kocina, Gmina Opatowiec, woj. świętokrzyskie POLAND

Time: 12:00 PM Holy Mass at the parish church of Saint. Barbara in Kocina

Time: 13:00 Beginning of the unveiling ceremony of the monument

Time: 14:20 Artistic part with youth from the Krzczonow and Opatowiec Schools

Time: 15:00 End of the ceremony.

National Patronage of the President Polish Republic
Andrzej Duda
in the Century of Regaining Independence

Patron and Founder of the Monument



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Liberator EW250 L of 34 Squadron SAAF, lifted off from the Celone Airfield on the Foggia plains of Italy, on 16 October 1944.

The crew onboard were: pilot Lt. Denis Osborn Cullingworth, co-pilot Lt. C. S. S. Franklin, navigator Lt. K. J. McLeod, radio operator Lt. G. Ray-Howett, bombardier Sgt. J. E. Speed (RAF), gunner Sgt. R. T. Pither (RAF), gunner Sgt. D.P. Richmond (RAF) and gunner Sgt. R.C. Bowden (RAF).

The aircraft carried 12 containers for a supply drop to members of the underground Polish Home Army in the vicinity of the town of Konskie in central Poland.

Intercepted by a German night fighter over Tarnow, the Liberator was shot down and crashed near the village of Krzczonow. Only the tail gunner, Sgt. Ronald Pither managed to bail out and survive.

All other crew were killed.

Sgt. Ronald Pither was wounded when he parachuted to the ground and was rescued by a partisan unit of the underground Polish Home Army. They hid him from the German forces and nursed him back to health. Moved between safe locations, while in the care of the Home Army, he managed to avoid captivity and returned to the UK after the end of the war.

Sgt. Ronald Pither's air uniform and a piece of shrapnel removed from his body are preserved and on display at the Museum of the Home Army in Krakow.

The seven other crewmembers killed in action during the tragic flight were buried in the vicinity of Krzczonow. After the war they were interred at the Rakowicki Cemetery In Krakow.

The flight crew were all volunteers, being fully aware of the huge risks involved in long distance combat sorties over heavily defended enemy territory and the heavy losses that these missions inevitably incurred. They were men who freely offered their service and who stood good, when called upon to serve the Polish people in the war effort.

(translation based on Jacek Janiec)



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ŚWIĘTOKRZYSKIEGO

GMINA



OPATOWIEC



KOMITET
"Upamiętnienia Poległych Pilotów SAAF-RAF
w Katastrofie Liberatora Ew250 w dniu 16.10.1944r."
ul. Rynek 11 25-522 Opatowiec

Artur Janiec