

Pilot officer Dudley Delacourtte SNOOKE.

Pilot officer Snooke's mission was to take his 83 Squadron Hampden to Lorient in France and attack the U-boat pens there. Although it was still early in the war, the 22 year old South African would have known only too well that Hitler's U boats were going to be a major threat. An island nation could not last long if the sea lanes around were infested with Reich's silent killers.

In total, 12 aircraft were dispatched to Lorient of which 9 located and attacked their target. It would seem that Pilot officer Snooke was one of those who had not found the target and returned with his bomb still on board. Arriving back over Lincolnshire in the early hours of Saturday 28th September 1940 he and his crew were unable to locate the airfield at Scampton. Running desperately short of fuel at 3.50am he ordered the aircraft to be abandoned.

His crew parachuted to safety but Pilot officer Snooke was not so lucky. Reports vary, but his parachute either became entangled with the doomed aircraft or he became impaled on railings on landing. In any case his body was found a short

distance from the crash site in St Matthias Church on the corner of Burton Road and Yarborough Crescent in Lincoln.

Contemporary reports indicate that the aircraft's impact caused a large explosion which woke most of Lincoln. The church was extensively damaged, evidence of which can still be seen today which bears this out. The survivors from the aircraft were Pilot Officer Eric Clarke, Pilot Officer Charles Laurence Turner and Sergeant Kenneth M^o Kenzie.

In recent years the pupils of Broadgate Junior School in Lincoln, close to the site of the crash researched this incident.

In tribute to PO Snooks the pupils designed a memorial in the form of a broken Hampden, which is now on display at the entrance to the school.

Slightly Below the Glide Path.
B + G Mennell