

### Alan Lutz, DFC, PMS Student 1936-37

Alan Montgomery Lutz was born on 25 March 1920, lived with his parents Charles and Agnes in Kenwick and undertook Years 4 and 5 at Modern School in 1936 and 1937. His oldest brother, Carl ("Bill"), was at Mod in 1926-27 and his next oldest brother, Robin ("Bob"), attended in 1930-31, both completing Years 4 and 5. Alan's cousin, Alfred, attended from 1925 to 1929. Only one of these fine young men survived the war.

An appendicitis operation kept Alan away from school for most of June 1937. However, he still managed to matriculate at the end of 1937 with passes in Latin, English, History, Maths A and Maths B.

Alan was a prominent golfer and won a WA Golf Club championship. He was working at accounting firm Merry and Merry as an audit clerk when he enlisted in the RAAF Reserve on 12 June 1940. He then enlisted for full-time service in the RAAF Citizen Air Force on 6 January 1941 as an Airman Pilot with the rank of Aircraftman Class 2.

Alan graduated from No. 5 Initial Flying Training School at Pearce on 28 February, 1941 and was promoted to Leading Aircraftman. He then attended No. 9 Elementary Flying School at Cunderdin, graduating on 1 May 1941. He departed from Sydney for Canada on 20 May 1941 for further training under the Empire Air Training Scheme.

Alan attended No. 2 Service Flying Training School at Uplands near Ottawa in Ontario from 21 June to 1 September 1941, graduating second in his class. With his pilot's wings on his chest and newly commissioned as a Pilot Officer, Alan was attached to the RAF and embarked at Halifax, Nova Scotia, for the UK on 9 September 1941, arriving there two weeks later.



Flight Lieutenant Lutz

Avro Lancaster similar to the one Alan flew with 156 Squadron

After experiencing a Scottish winter with 20 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at Lossiemouth training on Wellington bombers, Alan was posted on 25 March 1942 to 12 Squadron at Wickenby near Lincoln. From there he flew on 31 operations over Europe when RAF losses were averaging around 5% an operation, making survival highly unlikely after 20 operations.

During this time, he and another Wellington captain, Eric Utz<sup>1</sup> from NSW, received press coverage as “The Old Firm of Utz and Lutz”.

When aircrew completed a tour of 30 missions they were “rested” from operations for six months. On 1 September 1942, Alan was promoted to Flying Officer and two weeks later he was posted to 27 OTU as an instructor. His “rest” consisted of training inexperienced pilots on old aircraft no longer fit for operational use. During this period, both Alan and Eric Utz were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for their work with 12 Squadron<sup>2</sup>.

On 22 June 1943 Alan was posted to 156 Squadron at Warboys, 130kms north of London. This Lancaster squadron was one of the four inaugural squadrons that formed the elite Pathfinder Force, highly skilled at marking targets for the Main Force bomber squadrons. Alan flew on 15 operations with the Squadron, bombing the heavily defended targets of Cologne (twice), Hamburg (four times), Mannheim, Nuremburg (twice), Milan (twice), Peenemunde and Berlin.

On the night of 6/7 September 1943, the RAF sent 404 bombers to attack Munich. Alan’s aircraft took off at 7:50pm and was not heard from again. It was one of 16 aircraft that did not return. Alan was awarded his greatly-revered Path Finder Force Badge posthumously two days later.

#### **Path Finder Force Badge**



Alan’s Lancaster was shot down just before 1am on the 7<sup>th</sup> by a Focke-Wulff 190 A-6 night fighter flown by Hauptmann Friedrich-Karl “Nasen” Müller of Jagdgeschwader (Fighter Wing) 300. Müller was a highly decorated pilot credited with shooting down 30 Allied aircraft during the war, two of them on that night and two on the previous night.

Alan and his crew were buried in a common grave in Durnbach War Cemetery 44kms south of Munich. He was 23 years old when he died. His brother Robin and cousin Alfred were both killed on operations with the RAF, Robin on 15 July 1942 and Alfred on 4 March 1945. Carl survived the war, returned home, died in 1993 aged 83 and is buried in Karrakatta cemetery.

#### **LEST WE FORGET**

<sup>1</sup> Squadron Leader Eric Utz, DFC and Bar, was killed on operations over Germany on 5 April 1944.

<sup>2</sup> Alan’s DFC citation states, “This Captain of aircraft has participated in attacks on several of the enemy’s most heavily defended targets. Pilot Officer Lutz invariably descends to the lowest possible altitude to identify his targets and to ensure the accuracy of his attack. He has displayed high courage and devotion to duty.”

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## References:

PMS archives

### Internet:

156 Squadron RAF <http://www.156squadron.com/sqnhistory.htm>

AWM DFC <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1719232>

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CWGC <https://nominal-rolls.dva.gov.au/veteran?id=1054878&c=WW2#R>

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Imperial War Museum <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/life-and-death-in-bomber-command>

Jagdgeschwader 300 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jagdgeschwader\\_300](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jagdgeschwader_300)

NAA service record <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=5239701&S=9&R=0>

RAF Bomber Command Aircrew [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF\\_Bomber\\_Command\\_aircrew\\_of\\_World\\_War\\_II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF_Bomber_Command_aircrew_of_World_War_II)

### Recommended Reading:

*It's Never Dark Above the Clouds* by Syd Johnson, DFC and Bar, a former PMS student and Pathfinder pilot.

*Pathfinder* by Air Vice-Marshal Donald Bennett CB, CBE, DSO, the Australian who established and led the Pathfinders during World War 2.

*Pathfinder, the Peter Isaacson Story* by Denis Warner. Peter Isaacson AM, DFC, AFC, DFM, served in 156 Squadron prior to Alan Lutz's arrival. He flew a Lancaster under the Sydney Harbour Bridge on 22 October 1943, see

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter\\_Isaacson#/media/File:Lancaster\\_Q\\_for\\_Queenie\\_flies\\_under\\_Sydney\\_Harbour\\_Bridge\\_1943.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Isaacson#/media/File:Lancaster_Q_for_Queenie_flies_under_Sydney_Harbour_Bridge_1943.jpg)