

Reginald Charles Davie
(Rex)

Rex was born in Toowoomba on November 29th, 1919 and spent his early years in Goombundgee where he completed his schooling.

The Second World War broke out and Rex enlisted in the RAAF. He was transferred from Sandgate, Queensland to basic flight training school.

He learnt to fly, first on Tiger Moths and Wacketts in Australia, then to Canada as part of the empire air-training scheme, learning on Avro Ansons.

From Canada he was ferried by convoy through the U-Boat infested waters of the North Atlantic.

Then on to England and the RAF where his training continued, through Wellingtons, Stirlings and then onto Avro Lancaster and operations over Germany.

One of his particularly noteworthy operations was the Konigsberg mission.

The Citation reads:

“One night in August 1944, Flying Officer Davie piloted an aircraft detailed for a mine laying mission in a canal.

In spite of intense opposition from light anti-aircraft defences he executed his task with masterly skill.

This officers courage and determination were typical of that which he has shown throughout his tour of operations”

This is Air Force talk for what really happened.

Bomber Command planned an operation on the port of what was then known as Königsberg. The plan was to deploy a major force to bomb industrial areas on the opposite side of the city, while a force of three were to fly in at 500 ft. and lay a series of mines along the length of a canal which connected the outer to the inner harbours. The object was to deny the use of the port facilities to the Germans who were using it as a vital staging post for their war on Russia.

The operation had been delayed on several occasions due to bad weather and it is possible that there was a breach in security. Also, one of the key strike-force had become unavailable, so Rex was ordered to fill in from a nearby squadron. He arrived in time to see the last of the main bomber force taking off and was given the operational orders to read on the way.

By exceptional flight planning he was able to catch up and rendezvous with the special strike force.

The diversionary raid had commenced and the first of the special strike force bombers began its run when it seemed that all the anti

aircraft defences in the city were there waiting and set for 500 feet. The first bomber was blown out of the sky and then the second met the same fate.

This was not a good place to be at 500 ft because it was obvious that the defence batteries had the range and height. With a notable disregard for orders, Rex decided to go in at wave-top height under the guns.

The mission required that two passes be made so it was necessary to fly the full length of the gauntlet, dropping mines as he went and then turn around and repeat the performance.

The Lancaster emerged somewhat the worse for wear, but in one piece, although now alone and far from home. It didn't take long for a night fighter to locate the lone bomber and take out both engines on one side. The night fighter was promptly driven off by the efforts of the tail gunner...probably damaged ...maybe even shot down.

He made for the nearest base in Scotland and through the combined superhuman efforts of himself and his crew, he brought his badly crippled bomber and his crew safely back home.

He was awarded the immediate Distinguished Flying Cross for this exploit and another for his many other successful missions. He is one of only 144 persons ever to be so honoured.

After the war, the RAAF suddenly realised that they had very few pilots with four engines, specifically Lancaster experience which was considered essential with the imminent introduction of the Lincoln (a development of the Lancaster).

Rex was asked to re-join and so started a life of endless postings and terrorising of the surrounding locals with his low- flying escapades, until his retirement as a Wing Commander in 1966.

207 Squadron photos show him in Spilsby in October 1944 with G/C Harris (Station Commander).

His citation is listed in Archive as –

DAVIE, Reginald Charles, FL - DFC* - 450413 - 207 Sqn - RAAF