

Witness of Ray Rosen's death. An account from Sqn Ldr (Ret'd) J N Hullah DFC RAF writing in Dec 1994:

'With the opening in mid-June 1944 of the V-1 onslaught, Churchill and "Bomber" Harris unleashed the might of the Command upon the launching sites in Northern France.

After the first two daylight raids in which 10 Squadron participated, Noyelle-en-Chausee 24th June and Montorgueil 25th June, it was decided that aircraft in 4 Group were to be flown in some semblance of open formation with an experienced pilot leading. This method was adopted following the tragedy over Montorgueil when a Flight Commander of 102 Squadron, Pocklington, Yorkshire was hit amidships by the bombs of another Halifax and blew up. The detached wing from this aircraft struck another and that one also went down.

So we come to the next daylight raid; another V-1, St Martin L'Hortier on 1st July and it transpired that this was the last operation of my tour, it very nearly was my last mission in more ways than one. The singular honour of leading was given to us in ZA-B.

The bombing procedure was that as we approached the target area an Oboe Mosquito would appear in front of the Group and mark the aiming point with Wanganui to supplement the H2S or Gee release point worked out by the Boffins. Each of the 120 odd Halifaxes carried some 8000lbs of bombs, a total tonnage of 450 tons, enough to saturate the V-1 launching site. Even if complete penetration was not achieved, disruption around the site would seriously affect the re-supply position. This, couple with the Typhoon and Tempest fighter bombers, shooting up every kind of transport, meant that the site would be effectively non-operational.

Take off for 10 Squadron was to be followed by a short cross-country, to join up with the rest of the raid, then return in 15 minutes and set course over Melbourne. 10 Squadron's base. The Channel was crossed, followed by the French coast where the ground became obscured by starto-cumulus. It was clear and sunny at our height, now 12000ft. Just past Abbeville the Mossie appeared, right on cue, and the whole force had just closed up for the final run in when there was one hell of a 'crump' 'crump' from bursts of predicted ack-ack. ZA-B's nose pointed to the heavens then miraculously, in seconds, we were straight and level again. It was obvious however that my numbers 2 and 3 in the formation were in serious trouble. Engines stopped or stopping and smoke pouring from holes in the fuselage. Number 2 just heeled over into a steep dive through the cloud cover, we saw no chutes.

Number 3, Fg Off Rosen who had done his second 'dickie' trip with me in April, raised his hand as if in farewell as he lost speed and height trailing an ominous cloud of greasy smoke. His rear gunner bailed out just before the aircraft entered cloud and just before it blew up.'