



Memorial Service for

**FLIGHT SERGEANT
CHARLES CARR ATKIN**

No 28 Operational Training Unit
RAF Station Wymeswold, England

THURSDAY 2 MAY 2024

Flushing (Vlissingen) Northern Cemetery
The Netherlands
Row D, Grave No 28

SERVICE CONDUCTED BY

Reverend Canon Stephen Murray

FLIGHT SERGEANT CHARLES CARR ATKIN

12316 PILOT

Posted to

No 28 Operational Training Unit,
Royal Air Force (RAF)

AIRCRAFT

Wellington Z1109

KILLED IN ACTION

5 March 1943

Breskens, The Netherlands



*Flight Sergeant Atkin's headstone in Flushing Northern Cemetery,
The Netherlands (Source: Find A Grave)*

Biography of

FLIGHT SERGEANT CHARLES ATKIN

Charles Atkin was born in Armidale, New South Wales, Australia, on 5 January 1916. He attended The King's School at Parramatta from 1929–34, achieving his Leaving Certificate. While at school, he enrolled with The King's School Cadet Corp, attaining the rank of Cadet Sergeant.

Charles enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force as a General Clerk on 19 February 1940 and, in September 1940, he applied for pilot training, graduating on 7 March 1942. In July 1942, he embarked on exchange duties with the Royal Air Force in England, where he was posted to No 25 Operational Training Unit at RAF Station Finningley, and then to No 28 Operational Training Unit at RAF Station Wymeswold in January 1943.



Flight Sergeant Atkin wearing his cadet uniform (Source: Atkin family)

On 5 March 1943, Flight Sergeant Atkin's Wellington aircraft crashed near Breskens, The Netherlands, after being hit by German Navy anti-aircraft flak. He was the sole occupant when the aircraft crashed as his four crewmembers had successfully bailed out. One crewmember was missing, believed lost at sea, and three surviving crewmembers were captured by the Germans.

Flight Sergeant Atkin's remains were removed from the aircraft wreckage and buried in Flushing Northern Cemetery. In 2013, the crash site was mistakenly excavated and additional remains belonging to Flight Sergeant Atkin were found. These were placed in the care of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and his remains were reunited on 3 October 2023.

Flight Sergeant Atkin was aged 27 at the time of his death. He was survived by his wife Jessie and son Philip.



*Charles Atkin with his wife Jessie and son Philip
(Source: Atkin family)*

Order of Service

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

READING

Romans 8:38-39

English Standard Version

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

OPENING PRAYER

Father in heaven, we praise Your holy name,
for all who have finished this life loving and trusting You,
for the example of their lives,
the life which, by Your grace, You gave them and the peace in which they now rest.
Lord, we praise You today for Your servant, Charles Atkin,
and for all that You did through him.
Meet us today, we ask,
and fill our hearts with praise and thanksgiving,
for the sake of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

All: *Amen*

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul:

He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil,

For You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven,

As we gather at the grave of Flight Sergeant Charles Carr Atkin,
we remember him and so many of our fallen sailors, soldiers and aviators,
and the great sacrifice they paid to secure our freedom.

We thank you today, Father, especially for Charles,
For the love that he shared with his wife Jessie and son Philip
And for the time You gave them together.

We pray today for Charles's family and loved ones, would you comfort
them at this time and give them your peace.

As we remember, we praise You for the joy and laughter Charles inevitably
shared with his team.

We thank You for that camaraderie and sense of belonging,
and for the courage of all who flew on his last mission.

Lord, comfort us as we contemplate this sacrifice,
and as we lament the loss of futures not lived,
give peace to those for whom their loved ones have no known resting place.

We thank you too, Father,
for the tremendous gift of modern science that has allowed us to reunite some
of Charles's earthly substance to this, his final resting place.

And we pray that Charles is with You now,
enjoying the fullness of perfect rest and eternal communion
with You in heaven.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,

All: *Amen*

DEFENCE ANGLICAN PRAYER FOR THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

O Lord our God, who has given us dominion over earth, air and sea.
We ask you to be present with us who are called to serve our country in the
Royal Australian Air Force.

Give us courage, a steady nerve and ready mind.

Sustain us in days of preparation, in the daily routine of servicing
and weary waiting.

Be with us in time of sudden peril and grant that under

Your mighty protection,

we may be preserved in body, soul and mind.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: *Amen*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All:

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.*

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

the power and the glory,

for ever and ever.

Amen

POEM READING

There Are No Frontiers in the Sky

Flight Lieutenant O C Chave

There are no frontiers in the sky,
The clouds exact
No austere dues;
The long bright lanes of sun
Ask not the patronage of those who fly.
What care the winds the colour
Of a face? Or does the night
Play jealous with her stars?
Unless she knows the status
Of an airman's dwelling place?
This infinite upon whose little rim
Man dares to crawl
Assesses not his politic or creed
But with indifference
Stays or succours him.

THE BLESSING

For the service and sacrifice of Flight Sergeant Atkin,
we thank Almighty God.
God, our creator and redeemer,
by your power Christ conquered death and entered into glory.
Confident of His victory and claiming His promises,
we have entrusted this man to Your mercy in the name of Jesus our Lord,
who died and is alive and reigns with You,
now and forever.

All: Amen

THE COMMITTAL

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy;
Slow to anger and of great goodness.
As a father is tender towards his children;
So is the Lord tender to those that fear Him.
For He knows of what we are made;
He remembers that we are but dust.
Our days are like the grass;
We flourish like a flower of the field;
When the wind goes over it, it is gone;
And its place will know it no more.
But the merciful goodness of the Lord
Endures forever and ever towards those that fear Him;
And His righteousness upon their children's children.

We have entrusted Flight Sergeant Atkin to God's mercy,
and have committed his body to the ground;
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our
Lord Jesus Christ,
who will transform our frail bodies,
that they may be conformed to his glorious body,
who died, was buried, and rose again for us.
To him be glory forever.

All: Amen

ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

Let us remember before God, and commend to His sure keeping those who have died for their country, those whom we knew and those whose memory we treasure, and all who have lived and died in the service of humanity.

THE EXHORTATION

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.

All: *We will remember them.*

THE LAST POST

SILENCE

REVEILLE

KOHIMA EPITAPH

'When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today.'

WREATH LAYING

BENEDICTION

May God grant to the living, grace;
to the departed, rest;
to the King, Commonwealth and all people, peace and concord.
And to us and all His servants, life everlasting.
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.

All: *Amen*

Please remain for a minute of quiet reflection.



FLIGHT SERGEANT CHARLES CARR ATKIN

(Source: Department of Defence)

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AIR FORCE