

New Zealand Society of Genealogists



THE MT EREBUS DISASTER – 28 NOVEMBER 1979

**THE HAWKE'S BAY EARTHQUAKE AND OTHER NEW
ZEALAND DISASTERS: INDIVIDUAL STORIES FROM THE
BURIAL RECORDS.**

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FAMILY HISTORY - PRESERVING OUR PAST FOR THE FUTURE



Mt Erebus – “place of darkness between earth and Hades”



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Background



- Air New Zealand flight TE 901
- A non-stop scenic flight to Antarctica
- Found 2500 feet up a 13,200 ft mountain
- No survivors – 257 people on board
- Worst disaster since the 1931 Hawkes Bay Earthquake





Individuals on Board



- Peter Mulgrew - took Sir Ed's place as commentator on the sightseeing trip
- Lady Helen Robb – wife of Sir Douglas Robb a well known heart surgeon
- Mr and Mrs Burgess on a trip as a 60th birthday present to their father from their six children.





Erebus Memorials



- Mt Erebus - a cross erected 3km south-east of the crash site
- Waikumete – Auckland for the unrecovered /unidentified victims of the crash
- Plaques remembering individual people
- Memorial windows





Wooden Cross



- A wooden cross to the victims of the Erebus disaster was erected above Scott Base by recovery workers.
- The original caption to the photograph reads: 'DC10 cross erected on Nunatak near accident site. Mt Erebus behind'.



The original wooden cross



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On Mt Erebus



- The cross is located approximately 3 km south-east of the 1979 crash site.
- This stainless steel cross was erected on 30 January 1987 to replace the original wooden cross, which had eroded.



On Mt Erebus



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The Waikumete memorial



- Erected above the graves of those not identified following the Erebus disaster.
- Dedicated by Air New Zealand in November 1980 on the first anniversary of the tragedy.
- Inscribed upon it are the names of the 44 victims whose remains were not identified or recovered from Antarctica.



The Waikumete memorial



ERECTED IN MEMORY OF THOSE LOST
IN THE MOUNT EREBUS AIR DISASTER
OF 28 NOVEMBER 1979
WHO WERE EITHER UNIDENTIFIED
OR NOT RECOVERED
A SERVICE OF BURIAL WAS HELD ON
THIS SITE ON 12 FEBRUARY 1980

*They who had scorned the thought
of any strength
Except their own to lean on
learned at length
How fear can sabotage the bravest heart
And human weakness answers to the prod
Of terror and they call
"Help us, Oh God
Then silence bids the Silent voice
be heard
Bringing its message like a spoken word
"Believe, Believe in Me
Cast out your fear
I am not up there beyond the sky
but here
Here in your heart
I am the Strength you seek
Believe" And they believed
From "I.e. Speak of God" by Don Blandino*

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Examples of other memorials



- In Warkworth a walkway was named after Beverley Price, a member of the Auckland walkway committee who had died in the disaster.
- There is also a memorial to her at Oakley Creek
Auckland



Beverly Price Loop Track



- Pohuehue Scenic Reserve, SH1, Puhoi. *
- Track is rough and can be slippery when muddy. DOC/PF



In memory of Beverly Price



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Rev Peter Tanton



- In Whangaparaoa, St Stephen's Anglican Church unveiled a stained glass window that had been commissioned to commemorate the death of eight local people, including Rev Peter Tanton.



Erebus disaster memorial windows at St Matthew in the City (Auckland)



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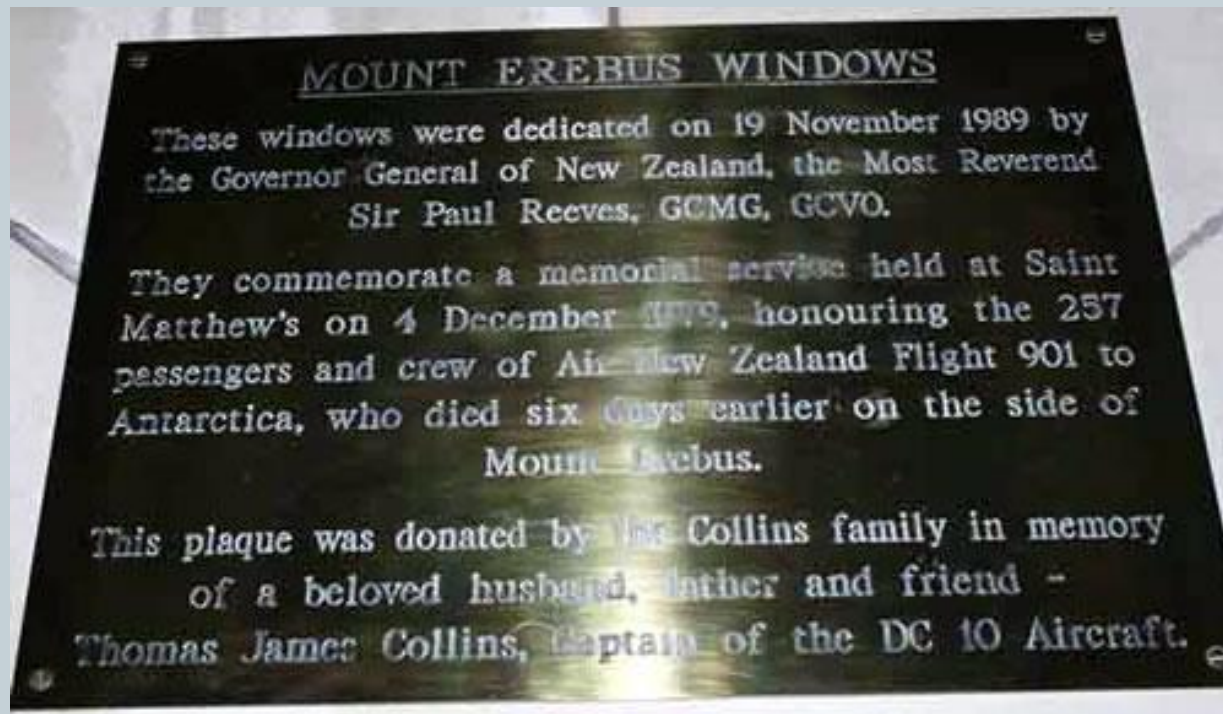
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Captain Thomas James Collins



- The Captain of the ill fated flight
- A memorial plaque donated by his family



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