

BORN TO FLY

One Hour Documentary



The unforgettable story of one of New Zealand's most extraordinary war heroes. Flying Officer, Porokoru Patapu (John) Pohe, became the first Maori pilot of the NZRAF and leader of air crews in the skies over Europe during the Second World War. He served 22 missions in his first tour of duty when the average life expectancy was just six; flew bombers through the equivalent of hell without receiving a scratch; landed wounded aircraft without wheels; and could navigate by the stars.

His feats earned him the nickname "Lucky Johnny" and the confidence of RAF Bomber Command who assigned him to train allied airmen from around the world.

On 22 September 1943, John Pohe flew a fateful mission that led to his German capture and contribution to one of the most famous events of the Second World War, The Great Escape. On 31 March 1944, John Pohe's extraordinary life came to a tragic and dramatic end. He was placed in front of a German firing squad. Pohe removed his blindfold and faced his executioners in the eye.



An AWA International Production for Maori Television

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