



Bomber crew

In 1944 Stella began a group portrait of a crew who flew Lancaster bombers. She made sketches of the six Australian and one British crew members. On the night of 27 April 1944 the crew departed on yet another operation. Their aircraft was never seen again. Not knowing their fate, Stella completed the painting from her sketches and official photographs.

But one of the men did eventually come back. Five months later, Flying Officer Thomas Lynch was discovered in a German prisoner-of-war camp. Badly injured, he did not remember anything between being shot down and waking up in a German hospital. Lynch returned to England in early 1945 in an exchange of English and German prisoners.

- Why do you think Stella arranged the group as she did?
- Where are their eyes looking?
- How does Stella tell us that these men are members of a Lancaster Bomber crew?

Look again

- Are there signs that the men in this painting are now dead?

Research: This painting is in the style of fourteenth century Italian works of art. Go to your library to look at the works of early Renaissance artists. Find a work of art that you think is most similar to *Bomber crew*. What are the similarities?

Painted in London, 1944, oil on canvas, 86.1 x 63.3 cm, AWM, acquired under official war art scheme, (ART 26265)