

Sergeant Donald William Bettinson 1235499 RAFVR

Donald Bettinson was a 20-year-old mid-upper gunner whose Lancaster vanished during a raid on Turin on the night of 12/13 July 1943.

His aircraft, ED726 EA-V, was part of a force of 294 Lancasters sent to attack Turin and one of 13 which failed to return. Three nights earlier his aircraft was damaged by flak over Gelsenkirchen, but it made it back to base at RAF Fiskerton in Lincolnshire and was repaired in time for the Turin raid.

Donald was part of a No. 49 Squadron crew on their 13th operation. Two members of his regular crew, the bomb-aimer and wireless operator, had to be replaced after suffering from heavy colds.

The others who died were the pilot F/O John Millar AFM, flight engineer Sgt. Paul Goodyear, navigator Flt. Sgt. James Gillin RCAF, bomb-aimer F/O George Lockie, wireless operator Sgt. Harry Read, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Donald Bettinson and rear gunner Sgt. Reginald Burnett. All are remembered on the Runnymede Memorial (panel 142).

His name can be found on IBCC panel 009.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook.

