

F/O Donald George Turner 150167 RAFVR

Lancaster pilot Don Turner was one of six men killed when his aircraft was shot down in March 1944.

His aircraft, Lancaster ND672 (EA-U) of 49 Squadron, was intercepted during a raid on Frankfurt on the night of 22 March, a raid that cost Bomber Command 33 of the 816 bombers sent to Frankfurt.

His was one of 19 Lancasters to take off from RAF Fiskerton and it was attacked over the Westfalen region in western Germany, crashing near the small town of Beckum, near Hamm. The only survivor was mid-upper gunner Sgt. Peter Valesco, a Chilean national who had previously lived in California.



Don's crew were on their fourth operation together but he had previously headed another crew that crash-landed on a Lincolnshire beach returning from Berlin in November 1943. His aircraft had lost height to pick up the coastline only to land on the beach due to a faulty altimeter, leading to several members of the crew being injured. Two of that crew, the wireless operator and rear gunner, were with him for the Frankfurt raid.

He came from the Bell Fields area of Guildford where he lived with his wife, Marjorie. He was the 28-year-old son of George and Victoria Turner.

The others who died were the 19-year-old flight engineer Sgt. Eric Lee, navigator Flt. Sgt. Stanley Upton, bomb-aimer F/O Wilfred Pearce, wireless operator Sgt. Linton Nightingale and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Jack Bennett RCAF. All were buried locally and later reinterred in the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery.

His name can be found on panel 109.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Bomber Command Losses 1943 and 1944 by Bill Chorley.