

Harold E Bolton, 827 Sq

Harold E Bolton, 827 Sq, M/Sgt, 78, a Crew Chief of the 827 Sq. He and his wife, Inez, attended reunions in 1983, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, and 1993.

Clair Daniels, 825 Sq

Editor's Note

This information came to the Association via e-mail in December 2000. The source quotes from a letter from Howard Doescher 825 Sq the pilot of the crew he headed on a Mission to Ploesti in May 31, 1944. The navigator Clair Daniels was a native of Tacoma WA. His death was reported in *Torretta Flyer* #35 Fall-Winter 1999, where it states that Lt. Clair Daniels is interred in the Sicily-Rome Military Cemetery. The questions at the end of this letter were answered by return E-mail. The crew did fly more missions with 2/Lt J L Czyl as replacement navigator. Lt. Daniels is also listed in the 1999 Memorial Book.

Following is a quote from a letter from the pilot, Lt. Doescher, dated July 7, 1944 to a friend of his in our home town, Spokane, WA which describes the occurrence: "On May 31, 1944 we flew a very rough mission and our crew had a close one with death. We went on a long raid, we got the hell shot out of us at the "get go", and on the way home too, in fact we were only five miles from field when we ran out of gas, heading for the ground like mad. I rang the alarm bell and the men started bailing out. Everyone got out of the plane. When I left, the plane was only 250 feet from the ground. Just as my chute opened, I hit the ground, so you know how close we really were. My navigator's chute never did open and he was killed. Four other men on the crew received the Purple Heart that day, and I was recommended for the DFC. Our navigator was from Spokane, I don't know whether you knew him or not. He was much younger than you. Maybe you saw a write up in the papers about him sometime in June. He was killed May 31, 1944" (I assume that the field Lt. Doescher refers to is Torretta.)

A little later in the letter, Lt. Doescher wrote: "After our accident, the Sq sent us to a rest camp for a week, so that we would forget it. Now we are flying again and have flown nearly every day. You see our squadron really has lost a lot of crews since we've been over here. We left the states with 18 crews, now we only have six original crews left. Of course mine is one of them. My captaincy has been put in already. Sure hope I live long enough to get the darned thing. We have 25 missions to our credit now, and we only have 25 more to go. Anyone who tells you this theatre of action isn't rough just tell them they are crazy, and I told you to tell them so.

It appears the mission in question might be the same one

described in the 461st BG web site as "Mission No. 36, 31 May 1944 Concordia Vega Oil Refinery- Ploesti, Romania". Apparently the entire 49th Bomb Wing 451st, 461st and 484th BGs were all on the mission.

In addition to any information about Clair, we'd like to find out if anyone knows what happened to his crew after his death. Did Lt. Doescher get his DFC? (Answer unknown) Is Lt. Doescher or any of the crew reachable? (Answer! Yes the pilot is a active member of the Association.)

Thanks, Hal Fogelquist



Lyman Fairbanks, 827 Sq

Lyman Fairbanks, 827 Sq (Lt Col USAF, Ret) business founder and aviation enthusiast was born in Washington, DC. He moved to Arlington, VA at an early age, residing there until his death, April 16, 2000.

After his combat tour flying B-24 Liberators in WW 11, he was stationed at Boiling AF Base. In 1945 he started his business which continues today. In 1945 an Air National Guard unit was founded at Andrews AFB, where he flew one of the first airplanes at the inaugural ceremony there, becoming Air Base Group Commander of the DC Air National Guard. In 1951 he was recalled to active duty and flew combat in Korea.

He is a 10th generation of the first Fairbanks in America, Jonathan 1, builder of the Fairbanks House 1636, the oldest wooden house still standing in America at Dedham, MA. He was an active member and past President of the Arlington Rotary Club, Washington Golf and Country Club, and Resurrection Lutheran Church. He is missed by his wife of 59 years, Mary Ellen Wittstatt Fairbanks, a daughter, Penelope, Holloway, a son, Lyman (Nick) III a granddaughter, a grandson, a great grandson, a brother, Bernard and his many friends.

Private burial was at Arlington National Cemetery not very far from the tree and memorial plaque installed by the 484th Bomb Group Association.