



Historian's Update



Jerry Whiting
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Lt. "Dud" Crouchley Recovery

A highlight of this past year for me has been the recovery and identification of the remains of 828th Squadron pilot John "Dud" Crouchley. Last year in my update I was hopeful that the excavation of the crash site in Bulgaria resulted in the recovery of Lt. Crouchley's remains. DPAA contacted me at the beginning of September and told me his remains were recovered and had just been identified.

I originally brought this case to the attention of our government in 2005 and it was truly a collaborative effort. Much of the credit goes to Colonel Stanimir Stanev in Bulgaria, who located the crash site, after it was erroneously reported to be in Rumania.

Dan Crouchley, the nephew of Lt. Crouchley, has been closely watching this case, along with the children of three of the crew members who survived the shootdown, Mark LaScotte, Harriet Butchko, and John Wilson. It appears Lt. Crouchley will be laid to rest in Providence, Rhode Island, in the Spring. I'm hoping to attend the ceremony.

Mark Lascotte Visits Father's Crash Site

485th chairman Mark LaScotte fulfilled a dream this past September when he was able to travel to Bulgaria and visit the POW camp at Shumen where his father was held. He also visited the crash site where his father was shot down. Coincidentally, his visit occurred just after the remains of pilot Dud Crouchley were identified, making his trip even more meaningful, since Lt. Crouchley was the pilot of Mark's father's plane. While there, Mark presented Stan Stanev with a plaque from the 485th, thanking him for his efforts in locating the crash site for our government. Stan worked on this case for more than 14 years, making multiple trips to the remote crash site with U.S. investigators. Needless to say, it was a memorable trip for Mark.



Stan receiving plaque from Mark LaScotte

831st Squadron Pilot Reaches Century Mark

In November 831st Sqdn pilot Vince Lewis celebrated his 100th birthday with family and friends. Vince attended several of the reunions and helped me with background stories for several of my books. I sent Vince a copy of one of my books as a birthday gift, along with a letter from the 485th. Vince, an original pilot in the 831st, was shot down on July 20, 1944 over northern Italy and evaded capture for two months before being rescued.



Vince Lewis celebrating his 100th birthday

2019 Reunion To Be Held in Dallas

The 2019 reunion will be in Dallas again. Primary considerations for selecting Dallas are the wonderful reception our Vets receive there, both by the hotel and the local community, and very favorable pricing. See the 485th website for additional information.