

589540 DAVID ROBERT HAY
(3rd August 1938 to 2nd April 2018)

Always known as Bert, he came from his home at Stonehaven in Scotland, to join the 76th on 20th Jan. 1954. With his outgoing personality, he rapidly became one of the best known and well-liked members of the Entry. At the end of the first year he moved into the Air Radio stream and did well there. At one point he was offered promotion but turned it down so that he might remain with the Entry. Though not outstanding at sport, academically he did well, finishing 10th in the final O of M. This did not limit his enthusiasm to be involved in any "extracurricular" activity the Entry might indulge in.

On passing out his first posting was Hemswell, where he worked on the resident Canberra's. Not long after this he moved to Finningly, for his first encounter with 'V' bombers (Valiants). 1958 saw him depart to Christmas Island, where he ran the aircraft radar servicing bay. On return to the U.K., Wittering was his next destination, to work on the Valiants and Victors there. Two and a half years in Singapore followed, servicing Canberra's, Argosy's and Valetta's. A final home posting was six months at Leuchars, working on Lightnings. His 12 years completed, he left the R.A.F in July 68.

In civvy street he joined Rank Xerox and stayed with them for 25 years. In 1982 he was nominated as top Service Engineer in the company. The reward, a 10 day, all expenses paid holiday in the Caribbean. One of his other memories was being the last person to service the teleprinter on H.M.S. Conqueror, the submarine that sank the Belgrano in the Falklands conflict. Fervently hoping that the message that the Captain received was not misinterpreted due to any work he carried out. In 1993, redundancy/early retirement came along and Bert took a part time driving job.

Early in 1994, as part of my search for ex-members of the 76th, I found a phone number that might have been his. When I called it, his elation at the possibility of being in contact with the Entry again clearly transmitted itself over the phone. Subsequently, he made the long journey with wife Jane, to attend all our major reunions in W-S-M. In 1997, he organized a smaller but very successful one in Chester, on his own.

Sadly, in the following years, his health started to deteriorate. Though he did get to a number of L.A.A. events. Last year, I was lucky enough to spend a couple of hours or so with Bert and Jane at Cosford Air Museum. Although he was struggling to maintain a brave front, his discomfort was obvious. Nevertheless, his old extrovert manner still shone through.

Now I am glad to remember him as an easy going, genial and generous friend. I am sure that any other member of the Entry would echo these sentiments.

Mike Collier