

Signalman 14597812 John Laking

Age 18

Royal Corps of Signals



John Laking (31/3/1925 to 25/10/2011) the son of Thomas, a Coal Hower, and Kathleen Lois Laking of Winney Lane, Harthill. and was the third oldest of the four brothers, Ernest, Horace and Cyril. In 1941, he joined the Air Training Corps, 975 Flight Woodhouse Grammar School, 303 Squadron, hoping this might pave a career into the Royal Air Force.

He was called up, on the 6th of May 1943, aged 18, and sent to the Gordon Highlander's barracks at North Bridge Aberdeen, where he completed 6 weeks basic training before being posted to Huddersfield where he was trained as an 'Operator Keyboard and Line' in the Royal Corps of Signals.

After further moves to Putney (London) then Hendon where he became part of a Mobile Signals Unit, and was posted to Lasham, near Alton, Hampshire, to train on the Royal Air Force's methods of operation. Then onwards around the south of England until finally sailing for France, after one failed attempt due to bad weather, he landed in late 1944 as a member of 3 Squadron 15 Air Formation Signals Regiment. After landing, he was stationed at Epinoy, Nord Pas-de-Calais, an Advanced Landing Ground and former Luftwaffe Airbase, working with RAF De Havilland Mosquito's.



John was demobbed from Wahn, near Cologne in Germany, where he met his wife, on the 7th of October 1947. In the group photo above John is 2nd from the left on the second second row.

Harthill Memories and History Society
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