

Sergeant Charles Derek Brown – Wireless Operator/Air Gunner/Special Operator

Derek Brown was the heart of the crew, always smiling, always lifting their spirits. A bright lad from Leamington Spa, he had won a scholarship to Leamington College, where he studied German. That skill led him to be chosen for a secretive role as a Special Operator, using the ABC (Airborne Cigar) system to jam enemy communications. He responded to an appeal for German Speaking airmen, even though he had no idea what the mysterious role entailed. His work was vital but classified, even his own family wouldn't have known the full extent of what he did. Married to his sweetheart Doris in 1942, he had "forgotten" to mention to the RAF that he was married, also adding an 'e' to his name (Browne) so he could volunteer for the Pathfinder missions; those positions were restricted to unmarried men. (Source: Ingrid Shepherd and Dawn Woodward, Co-Authors of "From Bomber County to Berlin".)