

Colin George Dawson

We have had two Colin Dawsons as Association members . One Colin (known to us all at reunions) passed away in March. The other Colin, **Colin George Dawson**, who lived at Attleborough near Norwich, has now died too – on 21st September. Poor health prevented him from attending reunions which he would dearly have liked to have done if only to meet his namesake. Colin was a Sergeant Pilot on 74, flying Meteors during two stints with the squadron at Horsham St Faith – 1st January 1952 to 22nd June 1954 and 27th February 27th to 19th March 1956. Prior to 74 he was at No. 1 ITS at Wittering (1949-1951), then No. 6 FTS at Ternhill, No 205 AFS at Middleton St George and No 226 OCU at Stradishall. After 74, Colin was at Church Fenton and Thorney Island before leaving the RAF in June 1958 to pursue a career in commercial aviation, flying with Air Safaris, BUA, Channel Airways, Court Line, Britannia Airways and Gulf Air. He retired from flying in February 1986.

Of his time with 74 he recalled participating in the Coronation Flypast of 1953 in a Meteor T.7 with the Times Air Correspondent in the back seat. Just before lining up for take-off Colin lost all radio and intercom communication so he had to carry on in silence. The Meteor had insufficient fuel to return to base with the other 74 Squadron participants so he had to carefully ease his way out of the formation and fly in to Wattisham. 'I loved the Meteor,' he said some years ago, 'and had only one hiccup while flying the type. The canopy exploded when I was doing a max speed re-join over Horsham . Pieces penetrated the starboard engine cowling and one hit my leather flying helmet. So I flew an exciting circuit to land with the ejection seat activator flopping around my head. Thank goodness it had to be stretched down to my chest to operate!'

During his long military and commercial flying career Colin flew the following types: Prentice Mk 1, Harvard Mk 2B, Meteor F.4, T.7 and F.8, Vampire T.11 and NF.10, Tiger Moth, several Auster variants, Vickers Viking, Vickers Viscount (six variants), Piper Cherokee, BAC 1-11 (three variants), Islander, Piper Chieftain, Cessna 150, Bristol 170 and Boeing 737 (Gulf Air Fleet Captain). An impressively varied list.