

With heavy hearts, David H. Hamer's wife, Joan, his daughter, son-in-law, and three granddaughters announce his death at age 82 on Monday, April 3, 2017. He passed peacefully at home, without pain, surrounded by his family. His mind remained sharp and he continued to recite limericks until the end.

David was born in 1934 in Billingham, an area that would later be heavily bombed in WWII. Naughty young boy that he was, during the war he used to take tiny fragments of bombs that had exploded and put them on the railroad tracks, so that when the trains drove over them, it went "bang." He served in the British Royal Air Force in an intelligence role, before his career as a physical chemist brought him to the United States in 1964. After retiring from his career in chemistry, David became a pilot, which resulted in several long-term assignments in Berlin, Paris, and London. His travels also took him to India, Nigeria, North Africa, the Middle East, and most of the countries of Western Europe.

With a penchant for words and numbers, his love of crossword puzzles, indirectly, led him to cryptology in about 1986. He had been looking for a computer program that could help solve crossword puzzles and was referred to the American Cryptogram Association. He never did find the computer program he sought but learned about programs that cracked codes and ciphers.

As he did with most things he found interesting, he dove into cryptology with both feet and began writing and lecturing about its history demonstrating the use of Enigma machines to anyone who had an interest, from library groups to experts at conferences to his grandchildren - who learned how to correctly insert wheels and push buttons.

He became an internationally recognized expert in cryptology. In 2000, he was appointed visiting research scholar by the Bletchley Park Trust in England. He was a member of Executive Committee of the National Cryptologic Museum Foundation, in Fort Meade, MD, where he also served as the liaison officer with Bletchley Park and as Vice-Chairman of the Acquisitions Committee. He published several technical papers, and wrote book reviews and articles for Eye Spy, U.S. Naval Cryptologic Veterans Association (NCVA), Cryptologia (Editorial Board), Cryptogram, Chronological - Historical Association, South West Wales. His website will remain at: <http://www.intelligenia.org/>

As word of his death is now spreading and we are receiving messages, we are becoming increasingly aware of how much his contributions to the field are appreciated.

On our part, we are missing a husband, a dad, and a grandpa.

Per his wishes, there will be no funeral or service. His ashes will be scattered in England. In the coming months, there will be a luncheon to celebrate his life. He would love nothing more than for all of us to raise a glass in his name - preferably a glass filled with a good Irish whiskey. Details to follow. We do hope you will be able to join us.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, please consider a memorial contribution to the National Cryptologic Museum Foundation.

NCMF
POB 1682
Ft. Meade, MD 20755.

Condolences may be sent to:

Mrs. Joan Hamer & Family
201 Foxglove Trail
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062