



e-DEFENCE ELECTRONICS NEWSLETTER

The e-NEWSLETTER OF THE DEFENCE ELECTRONICS HISTORY SOCIETY
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ON BOMBS AND MISSILES

The **2016 Burns Lecturer** was **Dr Graham Farmelo**, and an excellent presentation he made taking as his challenging theme that of '**Winston Churchill, Nuclear Pioneer**'! Graham gave us a master-class on his subject, which will be fully reported in our next *Transmission Lines* in June.

Graham's lecture caused me to ponder on the challenges faced by those early pioneers of nuclear weapons – post-war development of the British deterrent is of course brilliantly covered by DEHS and Newcomen member **Jonathan Ayles**'s work on *Blue Danube* – on delivery systems, and on guided missile defence against the wartime and early post-war manned jet bomber. Graham was delivering his lecture in the month of the centenary of the first use of air-to-air rockets (oh yes it was – see Tailpiece!) and thinking on this, I recollected that, almost 20 years ago, our **Past President Dr Bill Penley, CB, CBE**, delivered our 1997 Spring Lecture on the subject of early British guided weapons, and that his paper had never been published - so here it is, in this **eDEN 46**! I mused a bit further on then-contemporary air defence, on the early British Army ground-to-air missile '**Brakemine**', and on how that weapon is remembered today – so I thought it would be useful to set down Brakemine's **Wikipedia** entry on Brakemine against an eye-witness account by **N.K. Brown, sometime WO II, REME Experimental Establishment, Walton-on-Naze, Essex**, together with an early historical article on Brakemine by **Second Lieutenant J. R. C. Pedersen, R.E.M.E.**, a slightly later missile researcher, as both these articles seem almost to have been lost from history. Re-reading those articles put me in mind of **early missile telemetry**, and so I have also published a very useful 1954 article on the telemetry of that period by **Kenneth Gatland**, which explains much of the thinking and work of that time.

Ops Board has important new information about the **10 August Conference on Interwar Telecommunications**, when our President **Keith Thrower** has assembled a galaxy of speakers to tell us of the latest research in the field; read the list and **BOOK NOW**! This month, for our diaries – on May 25th, what sounds like an interesting talk at the IET on **UAV Security**; the following evening, May 26th, our good friends the **Association of Old Crows** have their History Evening when **John Stubbington** will deliver one of his well-researched talks on **EW and Signals Espionage**, which he will conclude by addressing the fundamental challenge - the balance of national security against personal privacy. John's talk will address aspects of this evolution, with examples of significant events and their consequences; I'm afraid you'll also have to listen to me talking as well! This is followed on **Friday 27 May** by an IET Lecture by **Dr Mike Pywell of BAE Systems**, Military Air and Information Division, on **Aircraft-Sized Anechoic Chambers for EW, Radar and other EM Engineering Evaluation**, at the IET in London at 14:00. On **Sunday May 29th**, the **IET/South Yorkshire Air Museum Historical Electronics Lecture Day** (with free lunch!) features our own **Dr Mike Diprose**

and the doyen of air interception radar **Ian White**. Finally, do not forget the three Saturdays, **November 12th, 19th, and December 3rd** for the second **Secret Communications** events in **Arthur Bauer's** amazing museum at **Duivendrecht, Amsterdam**. Details for all events in **Ops Board**, and **[note IET events are open to non-IET members](#)**.

John 'Jacey' Wise's challenge to identify the source of the '**Autobombics**' missile in last month's **Tailpiece** was answered almost by return e-mail by **David Robertson**, and I summarise his information, followed by an accompanying appeal by David for help with his latest project. We close this issue with our **Publications** – as always, with thanks to **Keith Thrower** – and this month our **Tailpiece** features **World War 1 air-to-air missiles** from work by **Dave Morris** of the **Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovilton**, himself a very impressive speaker at our last Autumn Symposium!

To keep **eDEN 46** to a manageable size, held over until next month are articles by the late Professor Sir Martin Ryle, the continuing stories both of the building of ASWE and of WAAF radar mechanic Amy Bridson, and more research on the Ravenscar radar station and its people by Brian Mulvana and S/Ldr Mike Dean MBE.

As always, suggestions for improvements, offers of articles and all general comments to me at philjudkins@btinternet.com or info@dehs.org.uk.

Dr. Phil Judkins, DEHS Chairman.

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