



# ***e-DEFENCE ELECTRONICS NEWSLETTER***

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*Prof Simon Watts, 2018 Burns Lecturer*

## **CHINA UNDERLINES MARITIME RECONNAISSANCE NEED**



The **Burns Lecture 2018**, most excellently delivered by **Professor Simon Watts**, was a great success! The event was organised by **Keith Thrower** who, with **Peter Butcher**, provided terrific additional papers, and particular thanks are due to **Tony Jones**, our liaison with STEAM, for his hard and successful work in arranging the day so well. **Transmission Lines** is DEHS Journal of record, and a full illustrated account of the day, with the papers, will be published in June's TL towards the end of this month. Here in *eDEN*, we note here that Prof Watts' subject, **UK Maritime Surveillance Radars for the RAF**, is given added proof of importance by the fact that, as your Editor was writing this, **China's** first own-build carrier, known only as "**Type 001A**", was reported as having just completed its sea trials from its port of build, Dalian; it will join China's first, ex-Soviet, carrier, **Liaoning** (photo p3), in service in 2020. A third carrier is reportedly under construction.

In this issue, Operations Board again focusses on the IET (note in particular the **visit to the REME Museum**) and we feature the **Royal Navy's major conference *Silent and Secret*** on the deterrent at sea, where our members **Richard Moore** and **Jonathan Ayles** are both speakers. Our articles begin with the Air Ministry's wartime (1943) description in Air Publication 1093D of **UK air interception radar**, the systems displayed at STEAM – AI 4, 6, 8 and 10. We then move on to the ground station end of air interception, the GCI stations, and WAAF operator **Pat Sparkes'** description of the most famous, "**Starlight**", **GCI Sopley**, with the later introduction by TRE's Special Duties Flight pilot **F C Griffiths**, both paying their respects to the doyen of Controllers, **John Lawrence Brown**. To bring us more up to date, as TRE becomes **RRE**, **John Hooper** in a 1965 article describes the work then being carried out there, and to illustrate contemporary work at NPL and elsewhere, **Louis Essen's** article of the same date records current work on deriving **standard measures of the second**. After Thales' latest contracts, **Tailpiece** takes a different look at time, in wondering whether **Douglas Adams**, author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, ever operated the Army's **Wireless Set 36**; why? Read Tailpiece!

**Part II** focusses on **RCM**, and on **Sir Robert Cockburn**, one of its leading personalities. We reprint his abbreviated account of the "Wizard War" (we may in future issues serialise the full document) and then look at how history is written, as we have from his private papers his uncompleted notes for an Addendum to that account, so that DEHS members can see the original material and how Sir Robert was proposing to create that narrative. It is reproduced with Sir Robert's notes, and observations by **Brian Callick**, so that you may see history in its creation rather than its completed state. **Tailpiece II** was provided by the eagle-eyed **Brian Austin**, who spotted an example of **Boer War "ECM"** recorded by none other than **Winston Churchill!**

My and my wife Pam's thanks to the many members who sent sympathy and good wishes to her following her spinal injury; much of *eDEN* has been created in hospital corridors and waiting rooms, so please bear with me as my ever-busy correspondence may be delayed (but keep it coming!). Huge help has again been provided by **Mike Dean**, to whom, as ever, my most grateful thanks.

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

Dr. Phil Judkins, DEHS Chairman.

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**China’s first carrier, the ex-Russian Varyag, now the Chinese Liaoning.**

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