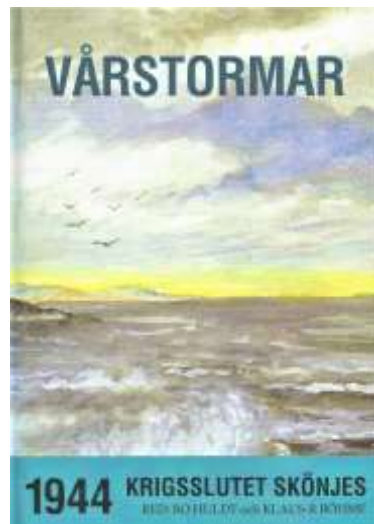




## ***e-DEFENCE ELECTRONICS NEWSLETTER***

The e-NEWSLETTER OF THE DEFENCE ELECTRONICS HISTORY SOCIETY  
No 91: February 2020 Part I

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### **SPRING STORM**

In this month's bumper 200-page issue – a true 'Spring Storm'! - Part II is devoted to a major monograph by our member **Paul Marks**, who has previously written on the bathythermograph. Paul has turned his attention and his research skills onto the **UK's use of sonobuoys in World War 2**, a subject on which surprisingly little has previously been written. Paul sets this fully to rights with an excellent piece of research, for which he merits our grateful thanks, in particular for his careful listing of his sources and his detailed comparison of UK and US developments. We hope Paul will provide insights into other subjects in the ASW field and welcome observations and comments to further Paul's researches.

Our heading picture of the collection of essays published as *Vårstormar* (Spring Storm) is stimulated by their first publishing **Leif Leifland's** account of the **RAF clandestine operation at Ottenby in Sweden**, which we featured last month thanks to **Mike Dean's** magnificent efforts in translation – and we discovered that DEHS members include a Swedish translator of whose skills we were completely unaware! This was none other than our colleague **Michael Ellis** (eDEN #90's SATCOM author), and Mike and I were relieved to find we had made no howlers in our translation labours: this month, in response to requests, Mike provides more background to Ottenby in '**The RAF Special Duty Unit in Sweden**' and details of its work, while **Michael Ellis and Swedish colleagues** are researching many wartime episodes of interest – we look forward to hearing more!

In *eDEN 91*, which as ever spans Army, Navy, Air Force and clandestine applications of military electronics of all vintages, **Professor Hugh Griffiths** first provides the appreciation by **Dr Stuart Anderson (DSTO, Australia)** of the work of our departed colleague **Professor Ramsey Shearman**, Faraday Medallist for his distinguished work on HF radar and on sea clutter. We move to record

with appreciation the contribution of many colleagues in the hunt, begun by **Mike Dean**, to record the story of **David Pritchard** in which **David Robertson, Arthur Bauer, Tony Devereux** and **Ian Greer** provided parts of the jigsaw. **Professor Simon Watts** (whose lecture at Malvern last month was, of course, excellent) provides input on the **Lucero aerals** on the **Barracuda** aircraft, with a further ASV2 mystery from **Andy Young** solved by **Simon** and by **Tony Waller**. **Clive Kidd** then winds the clock back to 1919 with a contemporary paper he has located of an **Italian Naval Receiver** of that period. **Roy Williams** provides fascinating detail of **Cossor's contribution to early radar**, and, as a frequent request to your Editor is for images of early radars, we reproduce from Air Publication 2276B two sets of first-class images – for **AMES 2, Chain Home Low**, and for **AMES 7, GCI**, in its Fixed configuration as from 1942.

1942 itself was of course the year of the '**Channel Dash**' (to Germany, Operation Cerberus, to Britain, Operation Fuller) and we print the observations of the **Dover Internet Forum, via Gordon Whitehead**, with a brief account of the little-quoted role of Bomber Command, and then of his father **J.W.W. Whitehead** in '**The Scharnhorst, The Gneisenau And the Gannets**'. **Anthony Heightman** provides personal recollections of the **WWII RAF 'Y' Service, Professor Christopher Rose-Innes** of his time as a '**Petty Officer Radar Mechanic Instructor**', and **Sidney Dunn** of his '**Trials of a Development Engineer**' during WWII. Trials of a different kind are described by **Dr Brian Austin** in his account of the mutual interference tests of radio and radar equipment prior to D-Day in '**Exercise Feeler**' and **Percy Vickery** contributes a brief perspective on the **RAF's 'Serrate' radar** homer before **Colin Mitchell** explores the **Navy's Stone Frigates and Strange Ways**.

We next continue a theme sparked by last month's **Tailpiece**, when eDEN noted the arrival in Britain's well-remembered '**Eagle**' and its '**Dan Dare**' feature of the woman scientist and space pilot **Professor Jocelyn Peabody**, to which the website of **Professor Melissa Terras** provides some background. We next re-publish here (with thanks to **Grahame Fraser**) **Dr Elizabeth Alexander's** paper on the **Sun's Radio Energy**, as an introduction to the fascinating life of Dr Alexander, first a geologist in Singapore, then radar expert in Singapore up to its 1942 surrender and subsequently in wartime New Zealand. Expect more on Dr Alexander's extraordinary career in future issues, thanks to her daughter, **Mary Harris**, and her thoroughly-researched book on her mother's life and work.

**Derek Jeffrey**, in '**Embarrassing Incident**' tells of life on Clee Hill to which **Mike Dean** provides illustrative photos, while **Dr Roy Axford** in his '**Memories of My First Radar Tour**' recounts his one-man destruction of **Malta's search radar (!)**, to whose universal display systems **Mike** again provides a descriptive footnote. **Eric Burrows** reminds us, in three separate incidents under the title of '**It Shouldn't Happen to a Nav Rad!**', of how hazardous life in the 1950s RAF could be. The lighter side of a serious subject is given by **Mike Rowland**, ex-WO1 in the Royal Signals, in '**Exercise Happy Harry**', while **Richard Trim** recounts the history of the **CRM544 Portable Transponder Test Set** which he managed. **Tailpiece** looks at the **anti-drone protection of London's Heathrow** airport, to which the obvious question is 'What took the authorities so long?'

Observant members will have noted that, in addition to Swedish translation and articles of his own, **Mike Dean** has provided much supplementary material illuminating other members' work. As always, therefore, special thanks to Mike for his invaluable help. Suggestions for improvements, offers of articles and all general comments to me please at [philjudkins@btinternet.com](mailto:philjudkins@btinternet.com) or [info@dehs.org.uk](mailto:info@dehs.org.uk).

Warmest regards,  
Phil  
Phil Judkins, DEHS Chairman.

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# OPS BOARD

DEHS members are shown in RED – and we may note how many events involve DEHS members!

**Science Museum, London: Exhibition, 'Top Secret: from ciphers to cybersecurity', until 23 February.** Tickets are free but can be booked at <https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/see-and-do/top-secret> The exhibition is curated by **Dr Elizabeth (Liz) Bruton**, Curator of Technology and Engineering, Science Museum, committee member, DEHS, and also IET History of Technology Network

**Tuesday 4 February** Confusion's Masterpiece: the D-Day Deceptions *Phil Judkins* IET Penryn Falmouth

**Wednesday 5 February** Confusion's Masterpiece: the D-Day Deceptions *Phil Judkins* IET Plymouth

**Tuesday 11 February** Convoy *Phil Judkins* NT Weymouth

**Wednesday 12 February** Women's Achievements in Engineering *Nina Baker* Newcomen London

**Wednesday 26 February @ 6.45pm** Airborne Maritime Surveillance Radar in WW2 *Prof Simon Watts* Brooklands Museum, Weybridge; Royal Aeronautical Society meeting. Details at <https://www.aerosociety.com/events-calendar/airborne-maritime-surveillance-radar-in-ww2/>

**Thursday 27th February 5.15pm-7pm** *From Code Cracking to Cyber Security: A Transatlantic Partnership* Talk and Collaboration Agreement signing between UCL and Bletchley Park. Room LG04, 26 Bedford Way, UCL, London, WC1H 0AP

Agenda:

5.15pm Arrival

5.30pm Welcome Address – R. Mark Evans OBE, Visiting Professor, University College London

5.40pm Address by Ian Standen, CEO, Bletchley Park

5.50pm Address by Prof Shane Johnson, Director, Dawes Centre for Future Crime at UCL

6.00pm Prof Mark Lowenthal, Commentator on US Intelligence matters and former Assistant Director, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

6.30pm Signing of the Agreement

6.45pm Drinks reception

DEHS members are warmly invited to attend this event which marks the signing of an agreement between UCL and Bletchley Park Trust. UCL's Department of Security and Crime Science and Bletchley Park Trust have identified opportunities to work together with the aim to enhance student knowledge of intelligence processes and evidence-based strategies. Bletchley Park, once the top-secret home of the World War Two Codebreakers is now a vibrant heritage attraction. UCL's Department of Security and Crime Science conducts research through its Jill Dando Institute, the first institute in the world devoted to crime science.

Full details and registration to: [re-EW6-6O6AE-F1C3WE-C0YIJ@ucl-dscs-mail.org.uk](mailto:re-EW6-6O6AE-F1C3WE-C0YIJ@ucl-dscs-mail.org.uk)