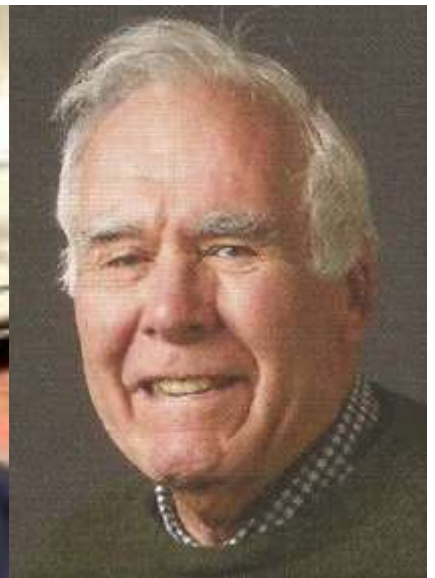




# ***e-DEFENCE ELECTRONICS NEWSLETTER***

The e-NEWSLETTER OF THE DEFENCE ELECTRONICS HISTORY SOCIETY  
No 95: June 2020 Part I



## **THE LOSS OF LIBRARIES**

**“When an elder dies, a library closes”**

In recent weeks, alas, three stalwarts of electronics knowledge are no longer with us to pass on their wisdom and knowledge. We mark with great sadness the passing of the **Old Crows UK Chapter’s Wing Commander John Clifford OBE**, of the **Radio Security Service, RSS’s, Bob King**, and of the **Royal Institute of Navigation’s Walter Blanchard**. **John**, *above left*, passed on May 5<sup>th</sup>; a pillar of the EW world for some 40 years both in **RAF service** and beyond, John’s reputation was world-wide, and his service to the **AOC’s UK Chapter**, of which he was **President** for many years, beyond compare. **Bob**, *above centre*, died on April 6<sup>th</sup>, only days short of his 96<sup>th</sup> birthday. was the driving force behind the on-going annual get-togethers of the few **RSS** people, plus colleagues from **Bletchley Park**; many thanks to **Brian Austin**, who provided this photograph. **Walter**, a DEHS member from our inception and also **G3JKV**, became a silent key on 7 March; after **RAF Transport Command** service, **Walter** held senior posts in **Decca** and **Redifon**, and was both known and honoured throughout the world for his work on navigation of whose **Royal Institute** he had served as **President**. So much knowledge perishes each time a veteran of military electronics dies; may I enter a plea to all members to make sure that the families of those known to them (and their own families) know NOT to bin their archives, records and memorabilia, but at the very least to contact DEHS for advice on how to handle it.

In Part I, **eDEN #95**, as is our practice, spans Army, Navy, Air Force and clandestine applications of military electronics of all vintages, and we begin with Feedback on last month’s eDEN from **Michael**

*Ellis, Mike Dean, Ron Muggleton and Brian Mulvana* – as Editor I am keen to encourage feedback, so please keep your e-mails coming when you spot something which sparks your interest or on which you have useful further information. Puzzle Page shows the richness of knowledge members can provide - *Bill Phippen, Prof Hugh Griffiths, Prof Stuart Anderson, Prof Ron Ekers and John Sarkissian of CSIRO, Nick Gregory, Guy Stanbury* all contributed magnificently; thank you all! Inspired by *Brian Mulvana's* query on *Irton Moor*, *Mike Dean* did a little digging on a related site and shows the results in '**Spook Central: But Where and When?** Feedback welcome! DEHS's restorer supreme, *Tony Waller*, next puts forward more ideas in the third of his series of articles '**To Restore or Not to Restore, THAT is the Question!**', supported by numerous photos of his own restorations-in-progress; Tony particularly invites comments from members.

Once again this month, I draw to the attention of members the wealth of information contained in long-ago articles in **Transmission Lines**, many written from personal knowledge by members now sadly no longer with us. This month *eDEN* reproduces several articles from **2005/6 - The Beginnings of Naval Radar** by *John Peters*; **The Origins and Early Days of Solartron** by *Wilfred J Fry*; **Graf Spee's Radar** by *F.A. Kingsley*; **the ADRDE Propeller Blade** by *Donald Tomlin*; **Building a Better Bomb** by *K Grantham-Wright CBE* and **Aspects of German Radar** by *Arthur Bauer*. Interspersed with these are more modern contributions - *Mike Elfed Williams' RRE Malvern: Satellite Tracker Memories*, and *Derk Rouwhorst's story of Klaas Postumus: the Dutch contribution to the Magnetron* – do not forget Derk's exhibition this summer. We next review **British Thompson-Houston's Wartime Story** as published by BTH themselves, and I have here deliberately included a series of sections on the jet, on electrical power equipment, on torpedoes and other areas to remind readers we welcome contributions on all these aspects of military electronics (yes, jet engines do have electrical and electronic parts!)

Part I continues, thanks to our President *Keith Thrower*, with three papers given at the very first meeting of 'The Friends of CHiDE' in 1995 - **Wireless Telegraphy and Radio Direction-Finding in World War 1** by *Dr Adrian Blond*; **The GPO Engineering Department and RAF Radar** by *R.G. Martin* and **Naxos: A German Mobile Radar Direction Finder 1943-45** by – of course! - *Arthur Bauer*. **Tailpiece** closes Part I with an intended piece on World War 1, the RFC 'Dawn Patrol' drinking song '**Hurrah for the next man to die!**' which I discover has its origins much earlier – in a poem of **an epidemic in India** and written up in the **Bengal Annual** of **1835**, attributed to **W.F. Thompson**.

Part II of this of *eDEN* focusses on **Landing Ships Tank (LST) and Fighter Direction Tenders (FDT)**. A brief background by your Editor sets the scene for DEHS member *Phil Racher's* memoir of his father in '**LST 304: Arthur Racher's Journey on a Large Slow Target**' before *Mike Dean* discusses the LST conversion to FDTs in '**COSSAC Radar**' – an important article, showing information never previously published, such as the AMES Type 11 aerial pendulum system. 'Red' Macaulay takes up the Canadian story of D-Day's **Fighter Direction Tenders**, followed by Lt Cmdr. *S.H. Morris'* post-battle assessment of **Fighter Direction in F.D.T. 217 during Operation Neptune**, and crew member *Able Seaman Lindop* concludes with '**H.M. F.D.T. 13The story of a Fighter Direction Tender**'. Part II rounds off with **Tailpiece 2**, where *Mike Dean* muses on '**A Postwar development from MATILDA?**'

I record once more this month my thanks to *Mike Dean* for his continuing series of articles, and for much other support. 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 all, and keep safe,

Phil

Dr Phil Judkins, DEHS Chairman

# INDEX

Editorial: In Memoriam - John Clifford, Bob King and Walter Blanchard	1
Index	3
DEHS 2020 AGM and 2019 Accounts	4
Feedback: <i>Michael Ellis, Mike Dean, Ron Muggleton, Brian Mulvana</i>	5
Puzzle Page – Answers! <i>Bill Phippen, Hugh Griffiths, Prof Stuart Anderson, Prof Ron Ekers and John Sarkissian of CSIRO, Nick Gregory, Guy Stanbury</i>	10
Spook Central: But Where and When? <i>Mike Dean</i>	14
To Restore or Not to Restore, <i>THAT</i> is the Question! 3 <i>Tony Waller</i>	33
Klaas Postumus: the Dutch contribution to the Magnetron <i>Derk Rouwhorst</i>	55
The Beginnings of Naval Radar <i>John Peters</i>	60
RRE Malvern: Satellite Tracker Memories <i>Mike Elfed Williams, I Eng, MRAeS</i>	68
Building a Better Bomb <i>K Grantham-Wright CBE</i>	69
The Origins and Early Days of Solartron <i>Wilfred J Fry</i>	75
Graf Spee’s Radar <i>F A Kingsley</i>	78
British Thompson-Houston’s Wartime Story <i>BTH Ltd</i>	79
The ADRDE Propeller Blade <i>Donald Tomlin</i>	100
Aspects of German Radar <i>Arthur Bauer</i>	102
Naxos: A German Mobile Radar Direction Finder 1943-45 <i>Arthur Bauer</i>	105
The GPO Engineering Department and RAF Radar <i>R.G. Martin</i>	120
Wireless Telegraphy and Radio Direction-Finding in World War 1 <i>Dr Adrian Blond</i>	126
Tailpiece: Hurrah for the next man to die! <i>W.F. Thompson, Bengal Annual, 1835</i>	138
<b>Part II:</b> Landing Ships Tank (LST) and Fighter Direction Tenders (FDT) <i>Editor</i>	140
LST 304: Arthur Racher’s Journey on a Large Slow Target <i>Phil Racher</i>	143
Making the FDTs: COSSAC Radar <i>Mike Dean</i>	169
Fighter Direction Tenders <i>Horace R. (Red) Macaulay</i>	192
F.D.T. 217 during Operation Neptune <i>Lt Cmdr. S.H. Morris via Mike Dean</i>	224
H.M. F.D.T. 13: The story of a Fighter Direction Tender <i>A/B Lindop via Phil Racher</i>	235
Tailpiece 2: A Postwar development from MATILDA? <i>Mike Dean</i>	241

# DEHS AGM 2020

## AGENDA

1. Membership report: 180 members at end May 2020.
2. Financial report: Statement of Account for 1 January to 31 December 2019 is below.
3. Election of Committee Members retiring by rotation: To consider election of the following Committee Member retiring by rotation and offering themselves for re-election:
  - Keith Thrower
  - Simon Blumlein
  - Mike Diprose
4. Any other business

Dr Phil Judkins, Chairman, DEHS, 25 February 2020.

**In these 'Covid' times, the 2020 AGM is proposed to be 'deemed to be held' and all motions passed.** DEHS members who have attended AGMs in the past are aware that those proposing ideas at AGMs will immediately be co-opted onto the Committee and put in charge of implementing their proposals; new Committee members prepared to work are also welcome at any time!

I would like to put on record my appreciation of the work of all the Committee members, and in particular Dick Green for his hard work as Treasurer and Membership Secretary and Peter Butcher as Editor of Transmission Lines. Keith Thrower, our President, and Liz Bruton arranged an excellent Lecture Day at the Science Museum on the theme of Security and Intelligence. Especial thanks are due to our retiring Committee member, Tony Jones, for his hard work in organising our events at Shrivenham and Swindon over many years, and we wish Tony and Yvonne well in their retirement.

### DEFENCE ELECTRONICS HISTORY SOCIETY Statement of Accounts 1 Jan - 31 Dec 2019

INCOME	2019		(2018)		EXPENDITURE	2019		(2018)	
	£	£	£	£		£	£	£	£
Members' subscriptions	2913.67		2937.48		Transmission Lines: production & distribution	1054.98		1056.37	
Members' donations	601.66		436.53		Admin: post & website	142.59		85.26	
Bank interest	8.39		3.68		Awards & sponsorship [Note 1]	250.00		400.00	
Publications, reprints & Proceedings	138.12		490.18		Publications, reprints & Proceedings	0.00		13.77	
Events: bookings	3250.6		735.00		Events: catering, room hire, exhibition materials [Note 2]	1427.34		1169.62	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>6912.44</b>		<b>4602.87</b>		<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2874.91</b>		<b>2726.02</b>	
Opening Bank Balances at 01 Jan 2019 (£)	6333.56	4195.10	10528.66		2019		2019		
Closing Bank Balances at 31 Dec 2019 (£)	10362.70	4203.49	14566.19	4037.53	1876.85	Total Income (£)	6912.44		
						Total Expenditure (£)	2874.91	4037.53	

#### Notes:

1. The Restoration Award to Mike Dean was brought forward from 2018.
2. Charge for Autumn Conference held at Science Museum (SM) on 27 Nov not yet invoiced, but SM estimated this to be £1816 + VAT, say £2178.

*Dick Green*  
DEHS Treasurer  
23 Jan 2020