



e-DEFENCE ELECTRONICS NEWSLETTER

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FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

It is the business of historians to unearth facts about history and debate their significance – but clearly if all the facts are not considered, or even known, then conclusions about significance may be very shaky! A regular feature within eDEN is to identify equipment and people not previously known, or perhaps once known but now forgotten, and in this issue we shine a light on three of these “Forgotten People” – above, on the left, **Wilfrid Bennett “Ben” Lewis, FRS**, the directing scientific brain of TRE during WW2; on the right, the man who was in many ways his opponent, the shy, reserved, **German General Wolfgang Martini**, head of Luftwaffe Signals and radar during that conflict; and between them, as seems perhaps symbolic, the WAAF who was “Radar Queen” during the Battle of Britain, the **Baroness ‘Elsie’ de T’Serclaes**, holder of the Military Medal for her courage in the First World War and responsible for all radar WAAF during that Battle.

‘Ben’ Lewis’ wartime career is described by **Prof. Sir Bernard Lovell** for the Royal Society, and reading his account may cause DEHS members to reflect on their notions of who did what at TRE during those six years; **General Wolfgang Martini** describes his own wartime activities during his interrogation by **Sqn Ldr Denys Felkin** of ADI(K), of which **Arthur Bauer** has provided us with a fair copy (many thanks to **Keith Thrower** for the suggestion); and I have slightly edited the **Baroness de T’Serclaes’** own memoir to provide this account of her time in radar, beginning again - despite her distinguished WW1 service and her having been a WRAF officer pre-war – from the ground up, learning radar at Bawdsey, and discovering among other episodes of her service that such luminaries as **Air Marshal Joubert** were not above kidnapping WAAF from other units if they were short of staff for experimental trials! Read and marvel!

Let me know, by the way, of any Forgotten Heroes; if we do not celebrate them, who will?

Part I of this **eDEN #97** begins with Feedback provided by **Prof Stuart Anderson, John Kaesehagen, Andy Young and Prof Simon Watts**; Andy and Simon leave us with the question – which equipment used the CV 15 valve? Answers please! Identifying equipment is also a feature of historians, and Ian Brown of Scotland's National Museum of Flight provides four puzzles for us to solve – again, answers please! We move to an extended tribute to **John Clifford OBE**, whose sad death we announced last month, by kind permission of the AOC Journal of Electronic Defense, and next to **Michael Ellis' note, 'Cackle Ye Not!'** on the intercepted signals of the German High Seas Fleet before Jutland, and the persistence of a careful cover story into **Dr. Adrian Blond's article in eDEN 95.**

Then on to our mix of Army, Navy, Air Force and clandestine applications of military electronics of all vintages, beginning with **Tony Waller's** very popular '**To Restore or Not Restore: That is the Question**' which this month tells us of an unusual Command set variant. Peter Butcher next recounts the story behind the story of **Death Rays**, originally published in '**Transmission Lines**' in 2007, but then expanded for '**Funkgeschichte**' in 2018, with a most intriguing response from **Bill Wilkinson**, who points out that, following the Bible's assembly instructions, **the Ark of the Covenant** had built-in defences against the impious, for it would function quite well as a Leyden Jar – read the article, get out your calculator and let us know the size of spark, please!

We then reprise the final section of **Ian White's** articles on **Air Intercept Radar**, which **Phil Racher** follows by posing the question '**Head-Up Display AI of WW2 - A Missed Opportunity?**' and providing details of the windscreen projected tube display as conceived by **Arthur Llewellyn** and tested by **Jeremy Howard-Williams** but sadly not adopted. Next comes a major article by **Mike Dean** on the convoy versus guided missile battle of '**November 26, 1943: Codeword 'Tiptree'** where we again encounter **the Henschel 293 anti-shipping guided missile** and the jammers used against it. **Lt Cdr Geoffrey B Mason** then recounts the story of '**Radar: The Antipodean Contribution**', with the wide variety of radars emanating from the modest islands of New Zealand, before **Martin Bolton** sets out the history of '**Rediffusion Training Simulators**'. Our sadly-departed colleague **Donald Tomlin** provides an explosive Tailpiece in '**Magnetron Valete: Out with a Bang!**' – I always wondered what the spade in the door of Army radars was for!

Part II, 'Navigation', stands as a tribute to **Walter Blanchard**, who wrote so wisely and so well on the subject. **Trevor Sanderson** most kindly provided one of Walter's definitive texts, '**Hyperbolic Airborne Radio Navigation Aids: A Navigator's View**' which illustrates the depth and span of his knowledge, and we match this with **R.J. 'Bob' Dippy's** account of his own invention of '**Gee: A Radio-Navigational Aid**' from the 1946 Radiolocation Convention. Walter worked with **Trevor Gray** on the third article in Part II, the history of '**Airborne Doppler Radar Development**', and again the late **Donald Tomlin** provides a lighter note in Tailpiece 2, on '**The Superintendent and the New Graduate**', humour at a senior level in a research establishment!

Particular thanks this month to **Mike Dean** for his major article in Part I, and for much other support. Suggestions for improvements, offers of articles and all general comments to me please at philjudkins@btinternet.com or info@dehs.org.uk.

Warmest regards all, and keep safe,

Phil

Dr Phil Judkins, DEHS Chairman.

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