



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

The e-NEWSLETTER OF THE DEFENCE ELECTRONICS HISTORY SOCIETY  
No 33: April 2015

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### **DEHS - PROPERTY PAGES?**

Well, we've had fashion pages in eDEN – the fashion photos taken against the background of the Kent sound mirrors in eDEN 27 – so perhaps the fact that a World War 1 intercept station, somewhat modified, appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* property pages of 19 March shouldn't have been a total surprise! Above, 'Hippisley Hut', offered through Bedfords (Bedfords.co.uk; 01328-730500), and in origin none other than the haunt of Richard John Bayntun Hippisley, amateur call-sign HLX, who with his friend Russell Clarke set up the intercept station in 1914 near Hunstanton, to monitor German Naval wireless transmissions. Their wooden hut forms the core of the listed property, albeit much modified (today's gas central heating would doubtless have been welcomed by Hippisley and Clarke), and the *Telegraph* gives an account of the intercepts received here, including those of the German fleet pre-Jutland, together with the fact that Hippisley received the OBE in 1918 and the CBE in 1937, the *Times* later describing him in their obituary as "one of the men who really won the war".

Picking up that Intercept theme, and taking us outside our 'European comfort zone' one of this month's main articles describes WW2 intercepts from outside Northern Europe – specifically, from South America and from Africa, at the critical 1942 days just before the sailing of the *Pedestal* convoy to relieve Malta. This issue moves on to relate the stories of two women - Margaret Watson Watt, to balance the portrayal by the BBC in 'Castles in the Sky', and Dorothy Robson, a WW2 bombsight specialist killed during flying testing. Mike Dean tells us of his further researches into the complicated saga of AMES 26/MEW, and Brian Austin recounts the little-known saga of the development of South African radar. We move closer to the present day with our reproduction of Ferranti's brochure of their Silverknowes laboratories, and a brief account of the eventful life of Richard Brett-Knowles who sadly died last month. Responding to queries, we provide both a little detail of the Polish AP5 clandestine set, and a photo of the British 1940 diathermy set converted to navaid jammers, then we ourselves pose some questions to our members - does anyone know more about the reported successes of the French submarine *Saphir* in "sinking" most of the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* Battle Group on exercises recently? Or about the 'Sheerophone', used in Venice for early warning of hostile aircraft in 1916? Finally, Ops Board gives members a couple of diary dates – if in the North, for Mike Diprose's ever-popular IET Science Week talks at the South Yorkshire Air Museum, Doncaster on 19 April, and

if in the South, for the Marconi Day at Sandford Mill, Chelmsford, when our member Dr Liz Bruton will be talking on Marconi and World War 1.

Dr. Phil Judkins, DEHS Chairman.

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