

Bawdsey Radar Newsletter 2010



Bawdsey Transmitter Masts - Aubrey Warren

Shout & Whisper Part 2

In December 2009 Bawdsey Radar Trust received a further grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This has enabled us to sponsor a drama based on the Oral History Project, *Shout & Whisper*.

Local playwright Suzanne Hawkes was appointed to write the play which is to be performed in the spring of 2010 at various venues including Bawdsey Manor, Landguard Fort, Felixstowe and the New Wolsey Studio, Ipswich. The play, *First in the Field - The Secrets of Radar* is a fictional drama based on fact. It uses the documented records of the scientists and the oral and written records of those who worked with them as assistants and radar operators, ferrymen and security guards. The play will dramatise the events leading up to the Battle of Britain, as seen through their eyes, and the struggle to develop a working defence chain of radar stations before the threat of German invasion became a reality.

Suzanne has written and produced a number of successful plays about local issues.

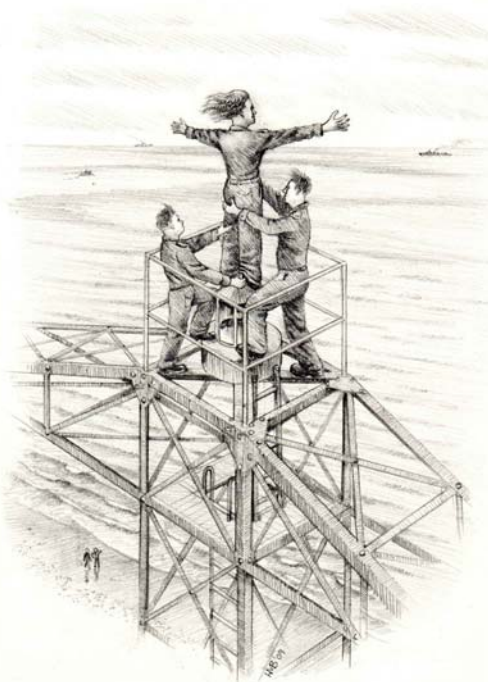


Shout & Whisper Booklet

A booklet is being produced based on some of the oral history interviews. Here is an excerpt from the memories of Reg Mann, a Radar Fitter at Bawdsey.

There was a WAAF called Jean, she came from Gateshead and we were a friendly old crowd you see ... and she climbed the mast right to the very, very top and there was a chap with me, I've never seen him since we left – Norman Johnson, he was a teacher in Belfast. He got one side and I got the other and we lifted her over the spike of the lightning conductor and she stood on the top ... she was only 4' 8" tall ... 365 foot up – just like the Spirit of the North she stood there. (Of) Course that was a huge big lamp on the top there – (a) red light. On top of the red light was a spike – I bet it was three foot and we lifted her over the spike so it went up her trouser leg you see.

Wonderful times really ... It took us 27 to 28 minutes to climb the mast.



Spirit of the North

An artist's impression - Mark Beesley 2009

BBC2 Coast

In autumn 2009 the BBC once again visited Bawdsey. On this occasion it was the production team from 'Coast' on BBC2. The programme, which will be screened in summer 2010, will focus on the valuable part played by WAAFs in the Second World War. Peggy Butler and Gwen Reading, both of whom were radar operators at Bawdsey, took part in the filming.

Peggy and Gwen have contributed to the Oral History project and you can hear selected snippets from their interviews in the Oral History Sound Files on the Bawdsey Radar website.



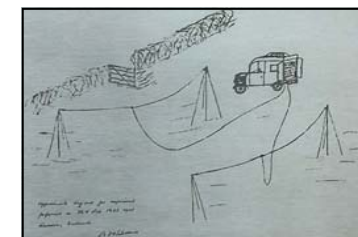
WAAFs at Bawdsey

The Daventry Experiment

On 26th February 1935 Watson Watt took a radio receiver in a small van to a field just south of Weedon and successfully detected the flight of a Handley Page Hanford bomber which had been directed to fly through transmissions from the nearby Daventry BBC Empire radio transmitter.

On 26th February 2010 the experiment was re-enacted by radio amateurs from the Coventry Amateur Radio Society and the Northampton Radio Club to celebrate the 75th anniversary of this 'Birth of Radar'. Read a report of the day on

www.andrewphotographic.co.uk/g8gmu9c.htm



Arnold Wilkins' sketch for the experiment

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