

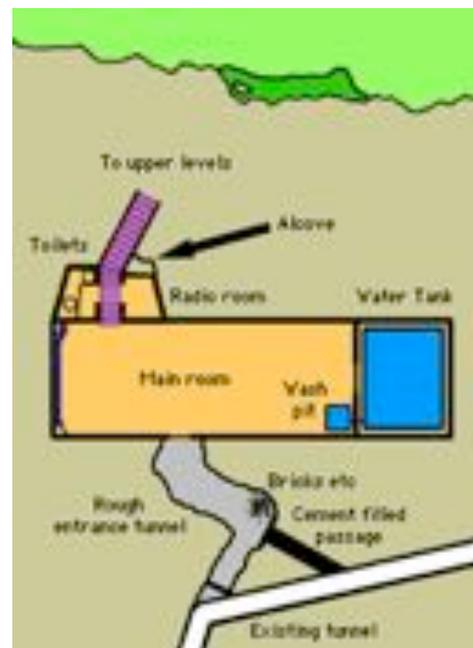
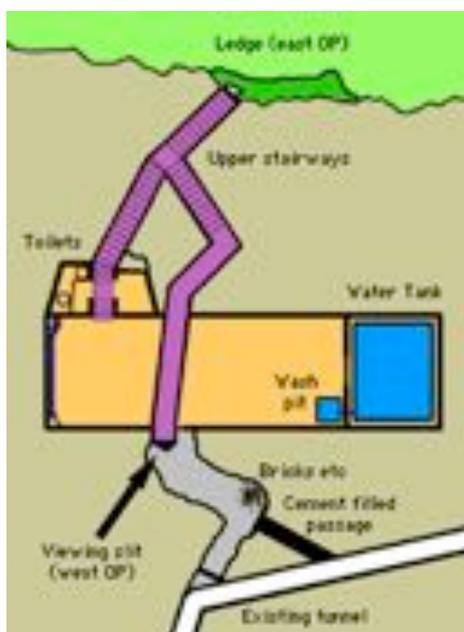
SCU-NEWSLETTER No. 4-19
Monday, August 26th, 2019

1. Richard Gambier-Parry, Ian Fleming, and Golden Eye!

Operation Golden Eye was an Allied plan during World War II to monitor Spain after a possible alliance between Franco and the Axis powers, and to undertake sabotage operations. Lieut. Commander Ian Fleming RNVR of the NID (British Naval Intelligence) formed the plan. As part of his plan, Operation Tracer was necessary to watch the Straits of Gibraltar. In the event, no German takeover of Spain took place, or an invasion of Gibraltar so the plan was shelved in 1943. Fleming later used the name for his Jamaican home where he wrote the James Bond stories.

However, the connection between the three shown in the above heading was actually very real. In 1941, Rear Admiral John Henry Godfrey, the Director of NID asked Richard Gambier-Parry to be wireless consultant for Operation Tracer, a highly classified, military operation - *in which a team sealed in a clandestine observation post* - was to monitor enemy vessels should Gibraltar fall to the Axis Powers. Initially, plans were made to provide a year's worth of accommodation for five men, including food, water, sanitation, and wireless communication. The scheme was later changed to one that would support six men. Eventually, provisions for seven years were supplied - ***just try to imagine the prospect of being buried for up to seven years!*** Admiral Godfrey - consulted with several experts on the feasibility and requirements of the scheme.

The team of six volunteers included three signalmen who would send information by wireless back to the Admiralty. The covert complex was excavated in the existing tunnel system of in the Rock of Gibraltar.



There were two observation apertures, one west over the Bay of Gibraltar, and the other east over the Mediterranean. A small radio room contained the equipment for wireless communications, which included one of our Mark 3 transmitters and a HRO Receiver - made by National Radio Company of Malden, Mass, USA. Three 12 volt, 120 ampere batteries were charged with one of two generators, one bicycle-propelled and the other hand-cranked. A rod aerial measuring 18 feet (5.5 m) in length extended up the staircase in a tube from the radio room and was inserted through the east observation aperture prior to transmission and was withdrawn when transmission was completed.

I have no doubt that the technical problems associated with this unusual wireless detail would have been dealt by our leading engineers Wilf Lilburn, Alfie Willis and Dennis Smith. (**Note:** Wilf Lilburn's wife Joyce - had worked as a secretary in the OIC (Operational Intelligence Centre) of NID before joining us in MI6 (Section VIII) at Whaddon Hall - see 'The Secret Wireless War' Chapter 24.

In January 1942, Gambier-Parry began trials of the wireless communications for Operation Tracer, using equipment already in Gibraltar, and sending one of his staff to conduct trials in the excavated wireless room. By 30 April 1942, the three signalmen for the mission had been selected. Their training began in May 1942, during which the wireless communications in which they engaged remained undetected by Richard Gambier-Parry's RSS (Radio Security Service) - a very severe test! By August of that year, the full Operation Tracer team was in position in Gibraltar. However, a year later, in August 1943, the team was disbanded when the Director of Naval Intelligence decided that he did not need the operation to go into commission.

2. OSS 'Station Victor.' This most secret wireless station was tucked away in a beautiful village in Berkshire just a five minutes walk to the River Thames. Hurley lies mid-way between Oxford and London and its '**Ye Old Bell Inn**' dates from 1135 when it was a guesthouse for visitors to the nearby Benedictine Priory. *That is 357 years before Christopher Columbus sighted the islands off America!*

It is about 40 miles from central London. Its location was an excellent meld between the secrecy provided by such a remote village, the open spaces necessary for a wireless station, and the proximity of the war time Headquarters of all the Allied secret organisations in London.

Note: I dealt with the MI6 (Section VIII) connection with Station Victor - in SCU-Newsletter 1-19 - under its item 2. 'OSS Station Victor and SIS.'



However, Philip Mullins author of 'OSS Station Victor: Hurley's Secret War' (published under his Pen Name Philip M. Williams); lives in Hurley. He organised a splendid two-day event - to celebrate the village's connection with OSS and for the OSS Society President, Charles T. Pinck to present the village with a framed replica of the Congressional Gold Medal and unveil a Blue Plaque.

On 21st March, 2018, the US Congress had bestowed its highest civilian honour upon the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The men and women who comprised America's first spy agency were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

On 4th June, 2019, the village of Hurley was presented with a replica of this medal in a frame by Charles T. Pinck, President of the OSS Society honouring - Station VICTOR. On the reverse of the medal are various operational and mission names. To honour the OSS Communications Branch, its largest component, are the letters JE standing for 'Joan Eleanor' - a VHF ground to air communication system - similar to our earlier MI6 (Section VIII) designed Ascension system. JE was designed by one of the senior officers at Station VICTOR, Lt/Commander. Steven Simpson.

Within the frame are two medals, showing the obverse & reverse and includes a signed copy of the OSS Congressional Gold Medal Act.

This states that: *'The OSS was America's first effort to implement a system of strategic intelligence during World War II and provided the basis for the modern-day American intelligence and special operations communities - CIA. The OSS founder was General William 'Wild Bill' Donovan - the only person in American history to receive America's four highest decorations, including the Medal of Honour.*

The OSS organized, trained, supplied, and fought with resistance organizations throughout Europe and Asia that played an important role in America's victory during World War II. The OSS invented and employed new technology through its Research and Development Branch, inventing new weapons and revolutionary communications equipment.

Its X-2 branch pioneered counterintelligence with the British and established the modern counterintelligence community. The network of contacts built by the OSS with foreign intelligence services led to enduring Cold War alliances. OSS "Mercy Missions" at the end of World War. It saved the lives of thousands of Allied prisoners of war.'

Signed by: The Speaker of the House of Representatives Paul D. Ryan and The President of the Senate, Orrin Hatch.

Philip Mullins, organiser of the splendid and very successful event at Hurley - and myself - pictured with the frame. It is the replica of the Medal and the Declaration - and presented to Hurley by Charles T. Pinck, President of the OSS Society.



The United States Mint sculpted and manufactured the Office of Strategic Services Congressional Gold Medal.

Its obverse (*heads*) features the inscription 'OSS' revealing three figures – a woman, a paratrooper, and a man in a suit – that represent the broad range of work undertaken by the OSS. Each figure is rendered as a shape without details, hinting at the way OSS agents sought to operate anonymously.

The diversity in the OSS is also reflected by the figures, conveying that OSS members were men and women, civilian and military. The design also features the dates '1942-1945,' the years during which the OSS operated. United States Mint Artistic Infusion Program (AIP) artist Emily Damstra created the design, which the United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Renata Gordon then sculpted.

The medal's reverse (*tails*) features the OSS Spearhead inscribed with code words related to important OSS missions and agents.

However, Philip Mullins had organised this as a two-day event.

The first day's events started on Monday evening the 3rd June. In the packed Village Hall, we were given a talk described as 'Reflections of Swan City' by family members of those who had served in Hurley. 'Swan City' was the slang code name among the Americans to describe 'Station Victor' the wartime OSS wireless station.

The second day 4th June. Started in and around the 'Barn' belonging to Ye Old Bell Inn across the road with 15+ stands representing connections with Hurley - the OSS, SOE, SIS and different aspects of World War II. A few of the stands are shown below. Outside, were a number of Jeeps and other military vehicles, a wireless 'station' and much more. The many visitors were enthralled by the whole event.



The Barn entrance



Inside the barn showing its splendid roof



One of the military vehicles



The film 'Operation Sussex' being shown - with earphones!



The local 'Home Front' during World War II.



The wireless display with an HRO in the centre!

Finally: The party of dignitaries prior to the unveiling of the Blue plaque commemorating the connection in World War II between OSS Station Victor and the Village of Hurley.

They are left to right: Representing the French Embassy. Lt-Col Eric Ygrand, French Air Force; Representing the American Embassy, Col. Jacki Pinkham US Air Force; Sir Gerald Howarth the retired Defence Minister and MP for Aldershot; Mr Phillip Mullins, Resident and author; finally the OSS Society President, Charles T. Pinck.



The Blue plaque on the gateway to Hurley Manor - This was bought by a donation from the OSS Society and the Hurley History Society, Phillip Mullins and David Burfitt mainly, plus help from The Olde Bell.

Its unveiling was a fitting end to a super couple of days at Hurley.



3. My D Day on June 6th 1944 - I went from Whaddon Hall up to Church Hill in Whaddon Village to test the last SLU we finished along with its team. We knew Church Hill as 'Windy Ridge' - as it was usually very windy!

On Windy Ridge, stood the MI6 (Section VIII) wireless station that handled all the ULTRA arising from nearby Bletchley Park intended for the Allied Military Commanders 'in the Field.' This had started with the traffic for North Africa, then Sicily and Italy.

However, its most important role was on and after D Day - when it handled the ULTRA received from Bletchley Park by teleprinter and sending it on by Morse to our SLUs (mobile wireless trucks). These were sited in the immediate vicinity of Army Commanders like Montgomery, Dempsey, Crerar (Canadian Army), in the US sector to the 1st US Army under Bradley, 3rd US Army under Patton, the 9th under Simpson and so on. The others had already left to join their allotted Army Commander and we had just finished the last two.

These SLUs had been fitted out at Whaddon Hall by 'Mobile Construction.' It was so-called because if it moved - we fitted our MI6 (Section VIII) wireless gear into it! Its boss was Dennis Smith and involved his team of seven (including me the youngest) - in fitting our 'Ascension' into aircraft and testing them - sometimes going on operations. Into MGBs (Motor Gun Boats) of the 15th MGB Flotilla down in Devon and testing in the Channel, and of course into the wireless trucks mentioned above.

75 years later on June 6th 2019 - I was again on Windy Ridge where there was a team of amateur wireless enthusiasts who made connections by Morse to fellow amateurs on the beaches in Normandy.

On Church Hill - 'Windy Ridge' - with my middle son Michael and the pre-school nursery children from Whaddon Village with their teachers. (The Church is just visible to the right of the picture).



Again on 'Windy' Ridge - with David White the erstwhile Curator of the famous wireless museum at Bletchley Park - sadly closed. We are in the wireless tent on June 6th where he and pals are in contact with fellow enthusiasts on the beaches at Utah and Omaha. An HRO is in the centre of the picture.

4. The Book Section. Only one book this time and it has to be Philip Mullins 'OSS Station Victor: Hurley's Secret War' - published under his Pen Name - Philip M. Williams.

With kind regards and best wishes,
Geoffrey
Richmond - Monday, August 26th, 2019