

CHIDE and DEHS

CHiDE (Centre for the History of Defence Electronics) was established at Bournemouth University (in the 1990s), following studies conducted by the Department of Conservation Sciences of the area around Worth Matravers, Dorset (the wartime location of TRE, prior to its further re-deployment to Malvern prompted by the implications from the Bruneval raid).

The Purbeck Radar Group was already in the process of being set up by Bill Penley and other former TRE people, who had returned to live in the area. The purpose of CHiDE was to gather an archive on the history of the development of radar and defence communications, and invite membership of like-minded engineers, operators, and enthusiasts. I edited the quarterly magazine 'Transmission Lines', and through this re-established contact with Colin Latham.

Bill Penley became an enthusiastic member, and each year two major events were held at the University: an Autumn Colloquium, and a Spring Lecture given by a notable person. In 2001, I organised 'Air Defence 1940 to 1970', and it attracted much interest and participation.

With a change of management and their new priorities in 2004, CHiDE was no longer welcome at Bournemouth University; fortunately, an approach by Colin Latham to the Royal College of Science and Defence Academy at Shrivenham was fruitful, and the Defence Electronics History Society has resulted, and continues.

Bill Penley was a quiet and thoughtful individual, but always enjoyed a discussion and reminiscing about his times with radar and guided weapon systems. It was a privilege to have known him.

Input by John Brown