



## **UK CHAPTER NEWSLETTER**

### **April 2022**

### **Welcome**

The UK Chapter Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to thank those members that 'attended' the recent virtual UK Chapter AGM on Friday 25 March 2022. It was most unfortunate that this year's AGM had to once again be held on zoom and it is sincerely hoped that 2022 will finally allow us all to return to somewhat normal activities when we can once again resume our frequent gatherings, events and of course friendships.

### **UK Chapter Celebrates 50 Years in 2022**

Yes, it's a fact, the UK Chapter is 50 years of age this year, so to mark this occasion your Board of Directors are currently looking at options to hold a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner sometime between end September and early December. Once a decision is reached a calling notice will be forthcoming to determine the level of attendance at such an event. More coming shortly. Meanwhile here follows some history of the formation of the UK Chapter:

#### **Early Days of the UK Chapter by Wg Cdr Roger Hannaford – UK Chapter Secretary**

The UK Chapter, of what was then the Association of Old Crows, was formed in the summer of 1972, led by Americans working in the UK. Key instigators were Lt Col Stanley Marker, USAF, who had retired in the UK and was a representative for a US EW company (I think Raytheon), Maj Roger Cyganek, USAF, who was an exchange officer on the EW Studies Team at HQ 90 (Signals) Group at RAF Medmenham, and Maj Roger Hermeling, USAF, who was the EWO at HQ 3rd Air Force, Ruislip. Founder members included Wg Cdr Mike Thurbon (EW Studies Team) and me (Ops EW, looking after the EW Canberras), also from HQ 90 Gp. From a transatlantic misinterpretation of the traditional English crimson hunting clothes (which are called 'pink' after the name of the tailor that made them), the Chapter was originally called 'The Red Coat Roost', and the logo showed a huntsman.

Although new members did join, the Chapter probably was not too active by the late 70s and was re-launched by senior officers from MOD. In about 78/79, when I was the EWO at HQ 1 Group, I received two letters in the same week. One was from the Gp Capt head of RAF Police at HQ Strike Command, not knowing that I was also a Crow. It said that



the AOC was a security risk and that we should not be associated with it. The other was from the Ministry of Defence, I think from the Air Commodore Director Air Offensive, saying that we really should get the Old Crows up and running again for all the invaluable interchange of information it offered, to promote EW awareness etc. I phoned to ask the policeman concerned whether he wanted to take this up with the one star. Ah, well, he said, just be careful not to let out secrets. And so, his letter stayed on file. The plod's concerns were finally put to rest when, a couple of years later, the Commander-in-Chief himself hosted a classified UK Chapter visit to HQ Strike Command, since when the Chapter has gone from strength to strength.

After Medmenham, I had been posted to Cyprus and then Lincolnshire and Germany and was unable to be much involved. I did keep up my membership which, in the days before credit cards, meant finding a tame American every year, giving him the 5 US\$ or equivalent and getting him to write a cheque for me to send. Mike Thurbon, however, was very active and was considered the dean of the Chapter, although he joined a little after me. Stanley Marker died in 1990 but, for some years afterwards, the Chapter held an annual dinner in his memory – a fitting tribute to the man who got us going.

## **Latest EW News Roundup**

(Kindly supplied by Dr Thomas Withington – Writer and analyst, editor of the Armada International EW webpage and newsletter)

### **Ukraine's Old School Answer to Russia's Modern Electronic Warfare**

The Ukrainian Army has fallen back on old-style communications technology in a bid to outflank Russian electronic warfare. As Russian forces were amassing on the borders of Ukraine in early 2022, the Ukrainian Army employed analogue technologies to pre-empt Russian attempts to control the electromagnetic spectrum. These technologies included old, wired analogue field telephones. The army is also reportedly using couriers and motorcycle dispatch riders to move message traffic.

<https://coffeordie.com/ukraine-russia-electronic-warfare/>

### **This is the Armada of Spy Planes Tracking Russia's Forces Surrounding Ukraine**

Staying in Ukraine, *The Drive* published an excellent and highly comprehensive article in mid-February. This gave a detailed look at the airborne intelligence gathering assets NATO and allied nations have deployed to monitor the situation in the troubled country. Drawing on open sources, the author gives a detailed account of the intelligence task of each aircraft and how this is deepening the overall intelligence picture. As the article notes, several of these platforms are aged but they play a vital role in helping NATO understand Russian intentions in the Ukraine theatre.

<https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/44337/these-are-the-planes-keeping-watch->

[on-russian-forces-around-ukraine](#)

### **The Space Force is using the Spire Satellite Constellation to detect Interference from Satellites**

The private sector is increasingly making its presence felt in the collection of Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) from space. Several companies now provide SIGINT collection services to public and private sector customers. One interesting development is that some of these satellite constellations can detect jamming of GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) signals. As this article explains, Spire Global's network of 40 satellites are now being used by the US Space Systems Command. They are detecting and providing details of GNSS jamming attempts to the US government to help safeguard US space assets.

<https://www.bollyinside.com/news/the-space-force-is-using-the-spire-data-to-detect-interference-from-satellites>

### **Bellingcat provides C-band Radar Detection**

Much as the private sector space domain is helping public and private sector SIGINT collection, the open-source intelligence world is moving into the signals intelligence domain. The investigative website *bellingcat.com* revealed in February synthetic aperture imagery gathered by the European Space Agency's Sentinel-1 satellite can be used to detect radar transmissions. Specifically, *bellingcat's* researchers noted that C-band (four to eight gigahertz) ground-based radar transmissions caused interference with the satellite's synthetic aperture radar. This lets the positions of transmitting C-band radars be plotted with reasonable accuracy along with pictorial representations of these radars' coverage.

<https://www.bellingcat.com/resources/2022/02/11/radar-interference-tracker-a-new-open-source-tool-to-locate-active-military-radar-systems/>

### **Pentagon sends Growler Electronic Warfare aircraft to Germany**

In a clear sign of NATO's commitment to protecting its eastern flank, the US Department of Defence announced in late March that it would deploy six US Navy Boeing E/F-18G Growler electronic warfare aircraft to Germany. The deployment is a clear example of NATO's resolve and may help the overall airborne SIGINT gathering effort continuing in earnest on Ukraine's borders. In other news, demonstrating its commitment to increase defence spending in the wake of the Ukraine invasion, Germany plans to acquire a dedicated electronic warfare variant of the Eurofighter Typhoon combat aircraft. This will replace the *Luftwaffe's* (German Air Force's) existing Panavia Tornado-ECR jets use for this role.

<https://thehill.com/policy/defense/600038-pentagon-sends-growler-electronic-warfare-aircraft-to-germany>

## Rah Rah Rashputin

While the war in Ukraine is far from over, initial assessments of the Russian Army's employment of electronic warfare have found its capabilities wanting. The force has clearly deployed significant quantities of EW systems into the Ukraine theatre. However, the quality of these has been questionable. Russian military communications also seem to have experienced significant problems. Some speculation has argued the army may be holding back some of its EW capabilities for deployment later in the conflict, or in support of the war's expansion into the Baltic. However, the lion's share of army EW assets in European Russia appears to have been deployed. Losses of Russian EW equipment has also been significant.

<https://www.armadainternational.com/2022/03/russia-ukraine-invasion-electronic-warfare/>

## Latest UK Chapter Awards

The opportunity arose on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2022 to finally present the John M Clifford OBE Trophy for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of EW (RAF) to the 2019 and 2020 winners, Sgt Steve Wallace, and Sgt Maddie Elliott respectively. Well done to both winners.

The trophy was presented by Sqn Ldr Wilde at 45 (R) Sqn and Jonathan Bramley (UK Chapter VP & Awards Chairman) had the privilege of being invited to the presentation ceremony.

The UK Chapter would like to give a Special thanks to Chemring Ltd. who kindly donated the countermeasures mounted on the trophy.



## **EW Job Advertising on UK Chapter Website**

<https://www.ukaoc.org/ew-job-vacancies>

I would like to continue to make all aware of the initiative to provide a low-cost EW Job Advertising section on the UK Chapter website which has continued to be popular with UK EW Industry. Why not take a moment to see what your next challenging role in EW might be in 2022?

Any companies/organisations interested in taking advantage of this low-cost job advertising facility, simply contact the UK Chapter President Chris Howe MBE for more information [cahowe500@gmail.com](mailto:cahowe500@gmail.com)

## **UK Chapter – Election of Officers**

Every 3 years in accordance with the Constitution we need to elect a Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Director to the AOC UK Chapter Board of Directors (BOD) prior to our AGM, which this year was on 25 March 2022. To that end, David Peck, the Elections Volunteer, duly announced the election procedure in Feb, which asked for any members to submit nominations by 1 March 2022. No nominations were received and therefore in accordance with the Constitution the standing officers in these positions may stand again. Subsequently a due process of nominations and form filling was conducted within the Board of Directors which resulted in all three Officers concerned agreeing to stand for another term of 3 years.

Our thanks go to David Peck, Elections Volunteer, in conducting this procedure thereby ensuring the UK Chapter continues to operate according to the Constitution.

## **Letters to the Editor**

Once again, I invite any UK Chapter member to consider sending any feedback you may have on any aspect of this Newsletter, the UK Chapter, or indeed the AOC. If you have a comment, a suggestion or observation to make, (hopefully positive) then please contact me direct at [cahowe500@gmail.com](mailto:cahowe500@gmail.com) when I will be only too pleased to respond and consider your thoughts for change or indeed items of interest for future newsletters. Thank you.

## **Future Events/Visits**

**AOC Region 1 Chapters' Virtual Presentations** – This series of presentations has proved to be very popular, and it is hoped to continue in 2022. The next presentation will be announced in due course. To take part you simply need to register with the AOC Region 1 Director, Dr Sue Robertson @ [sue@gpl.co.uk](mailto:sue@gpl.co.uk)

**AOC Europe 2022** – Montpellier, France 10 – 12 May 2022

Full details here: <https://www.aoceurope.org/>



**UK Chapter 50th Anniversary Dinner** - venue and date tbd.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Howe', is displayed on a light grey rectangular background.

Chris Howe MBE  
AOC UK Chapter - President

**Keep Checking out the UK Chapter website at:**

**[www.ukaoc.org](http://www.ukaoc.org)**