

# The Enigma Myth - Amateurs & Collectors and their Role for Cryptographic History

Presentation for the Symposium  
Global Perspectives on Cryptologic History“  
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[www.mythos-enigma.ch](http://www.mythos-enigma.ch)



Dominik Landwehr, Winterthur  
[www.mythos-enigma.ch](http://www.mythos-enigma.ch)  
[www.sternenjaeger.ch](http://www.sternenjaeger.ch)

# Mythos Enigma



## **Dominik Landwehr:**

Mythos Enigma. Die Chiffriermaschine als Sammler- und Medienobjekt. Bielefeld: transcript 2008. Reihe MedienAnalysen. Hg.von C.G.Tholen.



**MOST SECRET**

SWISS RANDOM LETTER TRAFFIC.

Swiss Random letter traffic is e  
al-type Enigma machine with speci  
over mechanism being on the tyre.  
of the message are the indicator  
ast four letters of the message.  
ith the fifth letter of the message



Amateurs & Collectors play an important role for the history of cryptography.

The Enigma history may serve as a case study.

# The Enigma-Myth

Study focussed on 3 aspects

- Swiss Enigma & Nema history
- Social groups today
- Enigma in the media

# Is there an Enigma-community?



contemporary witnesses



scientists



collectors



# Amateur & Collectors

- Collecting objects
- Documenting
- Simulating
- Community building

# Saving



- David White  
at the Bletchely Park  
Site

Former intelligence  
service person UK

# Hiding

„I do not want to have my name published. You might call me „collector x“. There are 3 reasons for my attitude: I have a few extremely rare pieces, not just cipher machines. There are people who would like to know that. And I feel that CIA & NSA are still following up on that and think these machines belong to them. They might show up one day and take them away from me“

“

.

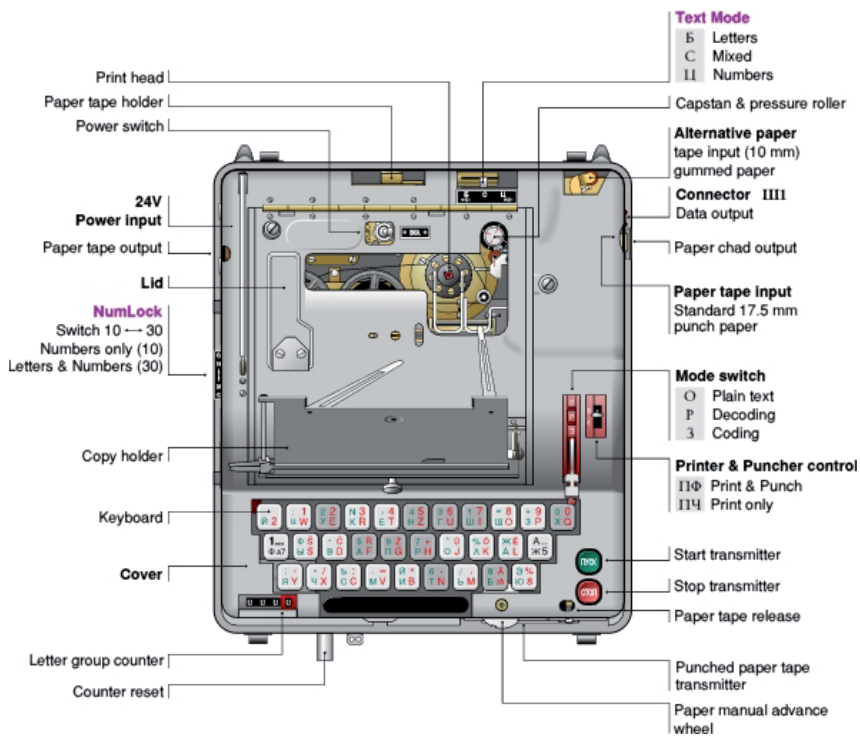
# Refurbish & Reconstruct



„I like the idea of having objects that nobody else has. These are parts that are often destroyed. Sometimes I get the feeling that there are persons who do not like that and are quite happy I am not writing a book about it“

Günter Hütter, Austria

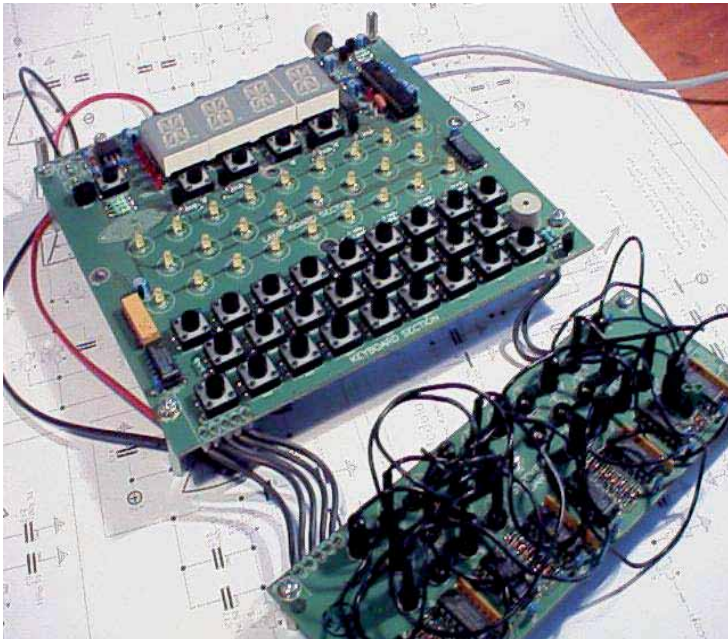
# Documentation



The Fialka  
documentation made  
by Paul Reuvers &  
group

[www.cryptomuseum.com](http://www.cryptomuseum.com)

# Replicas



- Electronic Replica by Paul Reuvers

[www.cryptomuseum.com](http://www.cryptomuseum.com)

# Simulations

- Paper Enigma



# Software Simulations



- Crypto Simulation Group

<http://frode.web.cern.ch/frode/crypto/CSG>



# Re-Enacting Enigma



- Bletchley Park UK

Re-enacting Enigma  
on weekends



A photograph of a vintage Enigma machine, a mechanical cipher device, resting on a wooden table outdoors. The machine is black with a keyboard and a complex rotor mechanism. The background shows a grassy area and some trees. The text 'ENIGMA in ACTION' is overlaid in large, bold, yellow-green letters with a black outline.

# ENIGMA in ACTION

Professor Tom Perera  
with

Grossdeutschland

Copyright (c) 2005



# Grossdeutschland



Grossdeutschland Soldaten

7./Kompanie Grossdeutschland USA

Gott Ehre und Vaterland

## Events Calendar

Through Living History displays and simulated combat tactical events our members explore what it was like to be a German soldier during World War II

[More](#)

## Prospective Members

Grossdeutschland is by far one of the oldest World War II reenactment units with 30 years of experience

[More](#)

## Our Unit Mission

As the leading World War II German Living History Reenactment Unit, our mission is to research and present the common German soldier of World War II

[More](#)

## Nonprofit Affiliation

The World War Two Historical Preservation Group (W2HPG) is a nonprofit corporation

[More](#)



## The equipment of Grossdeutschland-USA

Take a look at our vehicles, weapons and other equipment we use for our impression. **(Under construction)**

## The Grossdeutschland Division Treffen

Once a year we are able to travel to Germany to meet the men who fought for their country. Here we have an opportunity to discuss old times and learn new stories never before told by the surviving members of this Famous World War II unit.

[More](#)

## Unit Vendors,

The Following vendors are approved sources for equipment based on quality and past experience.

**(Under construction)**

## Links and Information for Further Study

Additional information regarding Grossdeutschland as well as other reenactment units can be found by using the links provided on this page.

[More](#)



## Event Photos

We are pleased to present some of our most favorite photographs taken at events over this past Year.

[More](#)

## Unit History

As a fighting unit Grossdeutschland was formed in 1939. The core of this four battalion infantry regiment came from the "Wachregiment Berlin".

[More](#)

## Period Photos

The following original wartime photographs and studio portraits depict men of the Grossdeutschland Division.

**(Under construction)**

## GD Jugend Soldaten Program

Because the minimum age for firing a weapon is 18 years old, many young people interested in participating in World War II reenacting are not able to do so.

[More](#)

## Contacting GD



# Summary

- Variety of groups, variety of motivation – but all focus in on the one object: Enigma
- Variety of information channels: Formal and informal..
- Boundary objects

# Conclusions

- Collectors & museums: Museum have formal rules. Collectors informal rules.
- Museums: Often can neither operate nor restaurate machines
- Collectors: Sometimes operate and restaurate machines

# Conclusions 3

- Museum: Long duration
- Collectors: Transitory



# Outlook

How to save, collect, restore, display and teach the present and future with all devices being black boxes with digital tech?



**Dominik Landwehr, Switzerland**

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