

AGENT ANNA'S

Russian seized in FBI swoop spent five years living in London

From **Daniel Bates** in New York
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POSING for a series of photos, this is the woman at the centre of the alleged Russian spy network uncovered in the U.S.

In one, Anna Chapman – the name she gave investigators – smiles coyly at the camera wearing a shiny green tracksuit top and black-and-white striped T-shirt as she poses in front of Big Ben.

The 28-year-old redhead apparently lived and worked in London for five years before allegedly becoming part of a spy ring based in the States which sent secrets back to the Kremlin.

The picture is thought to have been taken during her stay in the UK. It is unknown if she was engaged in espionage at that stage.

Miss Chapman is emerging as the femme fatal of the James Bond-style plot which saw 'sleepers' embedded in American cities, some more than a decade ago.

And she appears every inch the part, using her charm, beauty and high-society connections to move with ease through the circles of power and use other people to find out state secrets.

She is understood to have a masters degree in economics, an expensive flat in the financial district of New York, and runs a successful international online estate agency, a job which would have given her an excuse to make contact with people around the globe.

She is fluent in Russian and English and conversational in German and French.

On her Facebook page are a series of photos which show off her model-like figure. With 187 friends all over the world, she writes that her motto is: 'If you can imagine it, you can achieve it; if you can dream it, you can become it.'

Last night Russia admitted some of the accused were Russian citizens, but insisted they were not working to harm U.S. interests.

And Miss Chapman's tearful mother Irina, 51, said in Moscow: 'Of course I deny that my daughter is a spy. It's all very shocking to us.'

If records are correct then Miss Chapman was born in Soviet times in what is now the Kharkov region of Ukraine and seems to have been raised in Volgograd, formerly Stalingrad, in southern Russia. She studied at the Economics Department of the University of People's Friendship in

Moscow, an institution with long-standing links to the old KGB.

Miss Chapman has strong links to Britain and it is thought she was married to a British citizen. She appears to have been here for up to five years from 2003.

She said she worked at Barclays as what she called 'a slave' in their investment banking division before joining hedge fund Navigator Asset Management Advisers in Mayfair.

She also worked for a luxury flight service NetJets Europe, a company from which the rich and famous buy flying time in executive aircraft.

A former colleague at Navigator said yesterday: 'I always wondered how a Russian would have a last name like Chapman and I thought she may have married a European.'

Barclays has no record of an Anna Chapman working in its investment side at the time she claims to have been there in 2004 and 2005.

It appears that she returned to Russia to work for asset managers before moving to America to further her own estate agency company, which organises rentals and sales around the world.

Miss Chapman had been making a name for herself as a socialite in

Manhattan before her arrest. It was a very different picture from that painted in Manhattan's Federal Court, where she was accused of being a 'practiced deceiver'.

Miss Chapman was accused of meeting an official from the Russian government and passing secrets to him every Wednesday since January.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Farbiarz told the court that Miss Chapman was an 'extraordinary agent for Russia'.

Those charged alongside her include 'Richard Murphy' and 'Cynthia Murphy', of Montclair, New Jersey, and Vicky Lazare and a man known as 'Juan Lazaro', of Yonkers, New York state.

Another three – Mikhail Semenko and a couple known as 'Michael Zottoli' and 'Patricia Mills' – appeared in a federal court in Alexandria, Virginia, after being arrested in Arlington, Virginia.

Two more – a couple known as 'Donald Howard Heathfield' and 'Tracey Lee Ann Foley' – were arrested in Boston, Massachusetts.

Finally, Christopher Metsos – named as the mastermind of the operation – was arrested yesterday at Cyprus's Larnaca airport as he tried to leave the island for Budapest.



Spy in the capital? Anna Chapman in London



Smoking: Cigarette in hand, she reclines on a leather sofa



Posing: Pictured in London, above left, and on her Facebook page

They can't be spies – look what they did with the hydrangeas

THE 'agents' who wanted to infiltrate American society chose the one place that would arouse the least suspicion – nondescript suburbs across America.

They lived apparently ordinary, mundane and even boring lives, neighbours have revealed.

Rather than engage in overt espionage, they spent most of their time tending the garden and making sure their children got to football practice on time.

Their modus operandi was less 007 more Alan Titchmarsh. As one teenage neighbour living next door to 'New Jersey conspirators' Richard and Cynthia Murphy said, the pair could not have been agents – because of their gardening skills.

'They couldn't have been spies. Look what she did with the hydrangeas.'

But they posed a real risk to American security, authorities claimed last night. They tried to get close to the highest strata of political and military life, find out information about nuclear weapons, foreign policy, Iran and what was going on in the

White House, although they do not seem to have been too successful.

It was claimed last night that up to 50 more couples could be operating as 'deep-cover' spies.

One of the women accused of being at the centre of the spy ring used a British passport to travel for a secret rendezvous in Europe with her Moscow handlers. The woman, using the name Tracey Lee Ann Foley, is said to have been provided with the passport in Vienna by Russian intelligence.

The FBI claimed Miss Foley, 43, a naturalised U.S. citizen, had been instructed in a coded internet message to pick up the passport in the city. It was unclear last night whether the passport was genuine or fake and the Foreign Office said it was investigating.

Relatives of those arrested have denied they could possibly be spies. And significantly, none has been charged with espionage, only with not registering as agents, or representatives, of a foreign government, and with money laundering.

BRITISH LINKS



Smouldering: She poses in an another image posted on the Facebook website

Morse code, invisible ink and money buried in beer bottles

IT has been years since the Cold War ended, but the techniques allegedly used by the Russian spies could have come straight out of a John Le Carre novel.

The 11 are said to have used invisible ink to send messages to agents in South America, and buried money in beer bottles to be picked up two years later by fellow agents.

They would use codewords and had to perform certain actions to signify who they were - Anna Chapman was told to hold a magazine under her arm so her counterpart would recognize her, and plant a stamp on a wall map to indicate a hand-over had been a success.

'Haven't we met in California last summer?' a spy expecting a fake passport was supposed to say. Chapman was to respond, 'No, I think it was the Hamptons', according to the FBI.

Chapman is said to have sat in cafes and bookshops while another Russian agent drew up nearby in a van so they could share the

same wi-fi signal and communicate covertly via two laptops.

The Russians would have been schooled in Morse code and how to cover their tracks so they left no evidence.

They were supplied with false documents to travel in and out of the U.S. and one is said to have taken the identity of a dead Canadian to help him carry out his mission. The IDs would be used to create what the FBI called their 'legend', or story, as to why they were in the U.S.

Several communications are thought to have been sent to Moscow via radiograms, bursts of data sent by radio transmitter that could be heard on a radio receiver. The messages would sound like Morse code and would be deciphered at the other end.

Another method used was steganography, which embedded text and pictures on images which were posted on to publicly available websites. The text was invisible to the naked eye, but the spies had software to dig it out.

So how many sleeper spies are hiding here?

FALSE identities, invisible ink, beer bottles stuck in the ground as markers, clandestine meetings... there will be a temptation to brush off this episode as an obsolete relic from the Cold War.

But I believe that we in Britain should take this episode very seriously. It teaches, once again, the limits of what can be achieved in seeking to improve relations with Russia.

One myth needs to be dispelled straight away - that, with the fall of communism, the Russian propensity to engage in aggressive espionage against the U.S., UK and other Nato members ceased.

Britain's relations with the old Soviet Union during the Cold War were bedevilled by the Russians' repeated attempts to build up a huge intelligence presence in London.

The problem became so acute that in 1971 the government of Tory Prime Minister Edward Heath expelled 105 Soviet spies, who were working under cover out of the Embassy and the old Soviet trade office in Highgate.

A few years later the Wilson government also expelled a substantial number of spies, when I was working on the Soviet desk of the Foreign Office.

But that, you might argue, was the Cold War and espionage was a legitimate weapon in the stand-off between communism and the West. Yet, the Russians' habit of repeatedly rebuilding their espionage capability in London did not stop with the collapse of communism.

I was told by a senior member of MI5 that when the personable, reforming Mikhail Gorbachev ruled Russia, and London's relations with Moscow were unusually warm, there was no let-up in Russian intelligence activity here.

More than one source has told me that over the last ten years or so the Russian intelligence presence in London is almost as bad as in 1971.

TODAY the overly ambitious and naive hopes for a new start in relations with Russia, when Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin were in power, have largely turned to dust.

Russia under president Medvedev and prime minister Putin (a former KGB officer, don't forget) is a tough, unsentimental, nationalistic state, that is seeking to re-establish the international authority and prestige enjoyed by the Soviet Union and even the old Tsarist Russian Empire.

It regards the era of Gorbachev and Yeltsin as a moment of national humiliation, when the West took advantage of Russia's weakness.

No wonder Putin has enjoyed such popularity with the Russian people, when he is seen to have restored stability at home and respect abroad.

The fact that this has come at the expense of suffocating so many of Russia's fledgling democratic institutions is a price that most Russians appear happy to pay. None of this



by Christopher Meyer

Former British Ambassador to Washington means we cannot have mutually profitable and respectful relations with Russia. But we should have no illusions about how far we can take this, when all too often our national interests simply do not coincide.

For example, without a genuinely independent judiciary that will implement fairly and impartially contract law, Russia is a risky place in which to invest, as companies such as BP have discovered to their cost.

Or take Iran. The UN Security Council is struggling to come up with a sanctions-backed diplomacy which will be effective in deterring Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

BUT because of Russia's (and China's) energy and other interests in Iran, Moscow will never agree to the kind of hard-hitting sanctions Britain, France and the U.S. want and that might make a difference in Tehran.

For those who still regard Moscow through the rose-tinted spectacles of the post-communist era, the case of Alexander Litvinenko should have been the ultimate reality check.

Litvinenko, a political thorn in the side of the Putin regime, was fatally poisoned in 2006 in a London sushi bar with polonium-210, a highly toxic element. The British police sought from the Moscow authorities the extradition to London of their chief suspect, Andrei Lugovoi. It was denied.

Many take the view that Lugovoi enjoyed protection from the Kremlin itself. He is now a member of the Russian parliament, where he enjoys immunity from prosecution.

So, giggle if you will at the invisible ink and beer bottles of the ten alleged spies charged in the U.S. I laugh now at the failed efforts made by the old KGB to compromise and blackmail me when I served in our embassy in Moscow in the Sixties and Eighties. Honey traps can have their amusing side, particularly when they don't work. They tried twice to get me into bed with women and once with a man.

Never forget that these efforts to suborn and subvert are deadly serious, conducted by a state that takes an institutionally suspicious, even xenophobic, view of the outside world.

The issue for the new British coalition Government is that, if there are 'sleeper' cells of Russian spies in the U.S., it is more than likely that they are here in Britain too.

This is a clear and present danger to our national security, one that undermines any genuine cordiality in official relations between our two countries - something the newly created National Security Council should consider as a very high priority.