

# NOAH

The veritable oldest inhabitant of the *Ark* is Chief Electrician Bryan Davies, if one counts by length of service and not by age. Davies joined the ship at Devonport in March 1955 and apart from a brief spell for courses between the Second and Third has seen through all the five Commissions. He claims to have been on board for every mile steamed by the ship:

First Commission	23,773
Second	67,708
Third	76,857
Fourth	136,694

and by the end of the Fifth Commission the total could exceed 400,000 miles.

He expects to see the refit through but is somewhat doubtful about going to sea in *Ark* in the 1970's. Chief Electrician Davies is a bachelor.

A photograph hanging in the Chief Electrician's Store shows *Ark Royal*, off the coast of America, with the *Mayflower* at the end of her voyage - one of the highlights of the Second Commission. Many faces have returned to the ship in the last 18 months in different capacities: Captain Fell was Commander (Air) in the First; Vice-Admiral Hill Norton (F.O.2) was Captain in the Third and Vice-Admiral Gibson (F.O.N.A.C.) in the Fourth.



*Chief Electrician Davies*

## MET AND NAMET

*(Answers to questions on page 69)*

- 1 (a) 3 marks; (b) 2 marks; (c) 0 marks.
- 2 (a) 4 marks; (b) 1 mark; (c) 0 marks.
- 3 (a) 0 marks; (b) 1 mark; (c) 4 marks.
- 4 (a) 0 marks; (b) 0 marks; (c) 5 marks.
- 5 (a) 2 marks; (b) 2 marks; (c) 1 mark.

If you score more than 15, you ought to be a weather prophet; more than 10 is fair; less than 5 is dank.

- 6 All three - 5 marks each.
- 7 All three - 5 marks each.
- 8 All three - 5 marks each.
- 9 All three - 5 marks each.
- 10 All three - at some time or another - 5 marks each.

If you score 25 or more, you may have used your time profitably; if less than 5, you were wasting your opportunities. Better luck next commission!

## THE REGULATING STAFF

The job of regulating a ship the size of *Ark* is a many sided one, and perhaps all the sides are not always evident. It is certainly never a dull job; if any job can be said to be varied, this is it. There is always somebody who has thought up a new question to which he wants an answer, and the Regulating Office seems to be the natural place to take it. Sometimes - only sometimes - the answer has been short and to the point. More often the answer has required a lot of digging out. Surely every man in the ship's company has been to the Reg. Office for one purpose or another, sometime during the commission, though a few of these may have been less pleasant than others.

One remembers the U.K. leg of the commission as periods at sea, clearing up the problems of the last leave, alternating with brief visits here and there, with frantic planning for the next leave or run ashore. In particular, one recalls the decision at 2100 one Wednesday that we should give an unexpected Long Week-End on arrival alongside in Plymouth forty-eight hours later. The immediate co-operation of all departments enabled us to get all the requests in and to have the requirements for tickets assessed by noon on the Thursday and the intrepid Leave R.P.O. was despatched in the COD with the ticket demand, to return by helicopter from *Drake*, clutching some 1,100 railway tickets, and with the assurance that there would be buses ready when the ship berthed. So there were, and a special train as well. And there was the Long Week-End at Portsmouth when 1,500 men were away within 15 minutes of the first man falling in on the jetty - all the more surprising when one considers that the week-end leave was supposed to be for the Second of Port only.

The visit to Brest had its moments. Altogether 4,500 libertymen went off, most of them determined to demonstrate to the French how wine should be drunk. The French in their wisdom provided us with two large patrol wagons to bring them back in after the lesson. The Duty R.P.O. had a trying time explaining that the French authorities had not designed their road signs to be taken to England as souvenirs. After Brest we settled down to the idea of visiting foreign countries and the visits to Bergen and other ports passed with less incident. Subic deserves a mention. At 0100 the gangway resembled the dressing-room of the "Windmill" as the Duty R.P.O. relieved the returning revellers of the items of American uniform that they had somehow borrowed during their visit to Olan-gapo. The next morning there was an exchange and mart with our opposite numbers in the U.S. Navy as uniforms were returned. We ended up 17 caps to the

good. At Hong Kong there were those lovely, lovely ferries that gave the unwise merry-maker a chance to get his head down for a couple of hours before climbing the ladder, so that all the effects of San Mig had worn off except the Hangover.

On our initial arrival in the Far East Station we set a new First Ever when we arranged a three day leave, out of the ship, for every man in the ship's company (Standfast the Regulating Staff!) and found accommodation in various Army camps, Hostels, in Aggies and the like. It proved very popular and valuable as a "settler-inner" and was well worth all the midnight oil that had been burned.

The routine jobs go on, of course - Joining and Drafting, the drafting being the more preferred; Victualling, the sacrosanct hierarchy of "G" and "T"; and the ever-popular Discipline section, ready to provide "free holidays, without pay, in delightful surroundings" at short notice. The Reg. Staff can be seen at various times around the ship, doing odd jobs, keeping an eye on the Beer and Rum during a R.A.S., ensuring that nobody goes round the buoy in the Pay queue, or hurrying in answer to an urgent call, wondering what new bit of ingenuity Jack has dreamed up. When we get back to Guzz who will be the ones left to see that everybody else gets away on their leave? Why, the Reg. Staff, of course, Master-at-Arms Walker; the R.P.O.'s Newman, Doyle, Newland, Jones and Austen; the Leading Patrolmen Thorpe, Curtin, Willis and "Postie" Weston. We like to think that we, too, have contributed to a good commission with a good ship's company, and that we have not very often caused any to mutter, "B \*\*\*\* Crushers!!"



# UNOFFICIAL CHINESE

It was originally the intention to have a Chinese Laundry crew on board from the end of the Refit in November 1964 until our return from the Far East in 1966, but this plan was frustrated by politics and policies to such an extent that, until the ship received a part complement of eleven men in April 1965, the laundry had to be run by a scratch crew recruited from the Engineering Department - and a brave shot they made of it!

In April 1964 the Admiralty had found it necessary to decree that no person born in China and having a close relative still in China could serve in an R.N. ship West of Suez. This cut down drastically the availability of good Chinese laundry crews, as the more experienced and best known of them had wives or near relatives in the mainland of China. (Some of them appear to have wives in Hong Kong as well, but no matter!) Our friends in H. M.S. *Eagle* did a great deal for us out East by way of representing our views and in battling to get *Ark's* old team back again for us. Mr. Lam Sho Shan, known variously as the Number One or Boss-man or simply as Mr. Lam, had served in *Ark Royal* since June 1961 and like all, or most, of our Chinese crew he prefers to belong to one ship. At that time, however, the policy out East was against these "family" crews who move steadily from Commission to Commission and was in favour of a common pool which would send the next available crew to any ship, very much on a "take or leave it" basis. Although the Chinese are prepared to work almost anywhere to fill the bread-basket, they are also prepared to remain unemployed for quite a long period if it means that they can get back to their own ship. In the end it would appear that their patience out-last-ed the policy.

So it was that when *Eagle* arrived in Devonport, shortly before we sailed in June, she brought with her Mr. Kwong Siu Fu and his ten men to join us. What a change it must have been for them! Not only has the *Eagle's* laundry got every possible modern device - including double duplex presses which gives her ten steam presses to our five (of which one of ours has been incapable of being repaired for four years) but also the laundry in the "Bird" class carrier is Air Conditioned. Anyone who has spent five minutes in ours will note that ours just isn't, in fact, it could lay claim to being the largest Turkish Bath fitted in one of H.M. Ships, with a capacity of 765,000 cubic feet. Unfortunately, due to dhobeying commitments the Laundry Officer cannot allow the space to be used for slimming purposes.

Most of us will remember the trials and tribulations of the Laundry as we sailed further and further into the hot East in June and July. The laundry crew started work each day at 0700 and carried on until the job was finished - their code of honour will not let them pack up and go to bed until it is finished. If you can imagine these eleven men doing the dhobey for 2,500 in the heat of the Red Sea and with the added setback of the water shortage, so that it was after midnight before they secured, then you will understand why these few Chinese did not seem the happy, smiling fellows that the travel-writers always meet. Life was pretty miserable for them. During this time it was alleged that the number of Laundry Officer's memos issued exceeded the number of bundles of dhobey actually completed.

On July 11th we "razzed" the remainder of the crew of the laundry, plus the tailors and cobblers from Fort Langley. These reinforcements came over by light jackstay. You may not know it, but every R.A.S. produces more paper work than the stores embarked. In this case Fort Langley told us that they had 32 Chinamen coming over to us in 32 loads; what they did not say was that there were also 60 bundles of merchandise to come over. The Flight Deck was soon knee-high in bales of cloth, sewing-machines, personal effects, cooking pots and rolls of shoe leather. But within hours the Chinese were settled in and waiting for customers.

The unofficial Chinese are not subject to the Naval Discipline Act and are very much on their own. Basically they are not entitled to anything, not even food, and they are obliged to pay their own insurance contributions. As a result of their freedom from the N.D.A. they may be put off the ship, anywhere, anytime, without warning. The responsibility for finding their fare home is then entirely theirs. This can be quite expensive and they generally have to work their passages and get no actual money in hand. On one occasion, on their way to join the ship, they were stranded in Singapore for a month, and the bill for food alone for the 32 man crew came to \$ M 1,290. It is

## UNOFFICIAL CHINESE

usual to charge them for their food during any passage. So you can see that it can be a chancy and costly business to get established in the ship in the first place.

On the other hand, there must be some money in it or they would not be here. The Chinese are extraordinarily reticent about the figures but one can reckon that in an ordinary week out East there are an average of 30,000 articles processed in the laundry - and if there are Divisions there will be about another 8,000 articles added to the normal load. A spot of mental arithmetic will indicate the turn-over. Similarly, one imagines that they will make something like 4,000 suits in the twelve-month period. It is hard to assess how many pairs of shoes and sandals will have been produced in the cobbler's shop, but it is necessary for each shoemaker to make one pair a day for him to make a decent wage and there are seven of them at it so that it works out at least 3,500 in a year.

It is hoped that the Laundry crew will be allowed to stay with us until we reach Devonport again, but the Tailors and Cobblers will have to leave us and transfer to some other ship when we leave the Far East Station. This is because it is considered that West of Suez cobbling and tailoring are shore sides prerogatives and trading in these services in ships, at much lower prices, would affect employment in the Home Ports.

## N.A.A.F.I.

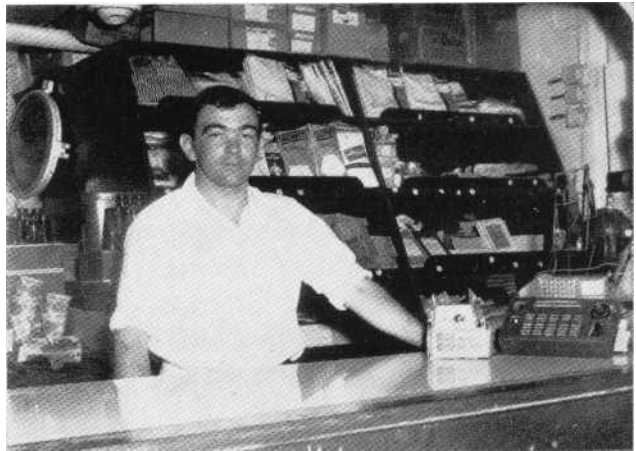
**C**anteen staff, although civilians, are members of the ship's company, and one is apt to forget that they also do their best towards making a commission. We have had longer stays at Singapore than first anticipated, but even so, the commission will be remembered as a happy one, bearing in mind we are here to do a job of work and not enjoying a pleasure cruise.

The canteen of today selling anything from collar studs to cars is a little different to the N.A.A.F.I. our parents remember, and N.A.A.F.I. has advanced by leaps and bounds since the days of sticky buns and cups of tea. Considering the space available the choice of goods is, we believe, more than fair.

Sales of cameras. watches. radios. etc.. have been good, and H.M. Customs will be gleefully rubbing their hands awaiting our arrival at Devonport.

The rebate paid to Welfare Fund is not as good as it could be, but sales are not the best in Singapore and Hong Kong due to traders taking some of the money normally going to the canteen, and with no overheads the traders can drop prices and be content with a very small profit. N.A.A.F.I. have to maintain staff, vehicles, boats, warehouses and clubs, etc., but get a fair share of sales under the circumstances.

The staff should by now be well known to most of the ship's company. Harry Bainbridge, Mo Parry, Terry Tunnadine and Ron Foley run the Main Canteen; Carl Rust is in the Bookstall; John Leavesley looks after the Goffa Bar; Ian Peck sells the cigarettes; Bill Shockledge and Chris Gilderdale dispense the daily beer ration. The tonsorial experts are Vic Thomsett and Gary Burnside. Tony Bennett in the Senior Rates Canteen; Bill Williamson at the Officers' Shop and Bill White at his Vending Machines complete the staff, under the management of Reg Henderson and Australian Mel Martin.



# MIDSHIPMEN

*as seen by one*

**T**hey appeared in two of Albion's helicopters one day at sea, were dumped on the Flight Deck with their baggage, and disappeared inside *Ark Royal*. Few noticed that the Mids had arrived - they confined their efforts to eating, sleeping, and watching the activity on board. On the sixth day they were seen again, for *Ark* had returned to Singapore, and they promptly went ashore.

The training programme got under way and this year's white-patched batch from Dartmouth started working through the ship's departments seeking instruction and cups of coffee. Some offices had it all organized, others left the Mids to learn by their own efforts. They discovered that responsibility was hard to find in a big ship and they carried out such jobs as O.O.W.3 or Q.D. Officer 5. However, in Hong Kong they ran the MSMB's which caught fire, developed leaks and broke down at inappropriate hours of the day and night; and in Singapore they were invariably lurked for the boat patrols. They challenged everything in sight, including unlit buoys and a submarine's sonar dome. In between times they legally arrested two boats.

At regular intervals there was a Mids' shake-up, which was deemed to be a "good thing" and for which duty victims were duly appointed. In fact there were duty Midshipmen to deal with every contingency including duty dipper out (for guarding beer on the Flight Deck), duty dipper in (for looking after girls selling poppies), and duty disciple (for church), besides the normal dutymen. Watches were kept on the gangway, in the boats, in the A.D.R. and Operations Room, in the machinery spaces, on the Flight Deck and by the duty divers during their training.

Ashore they upheld the ship's honour by trapping all available girls at the Officers' Club for two glorious weeks, and they played games against all comers (including the girls). *Eagle's* Mids were challenged to the whaler race of the year, but *Eagle* sailed suddenly, which saved them from the ignominy of losing and *Ark's* trainer from providing the prize, a barrel of beer. Their ranks included the one who was quite prepared to swim to Australia, the one who arrived offshore at 23.50 each night for the midnight boat patrol, the one who fell through a storing route hatch, and the extra-long haired one. As a result of their many *faux pas* they have left the following Midshipmen's Standing Orders for posterity and other good causes:

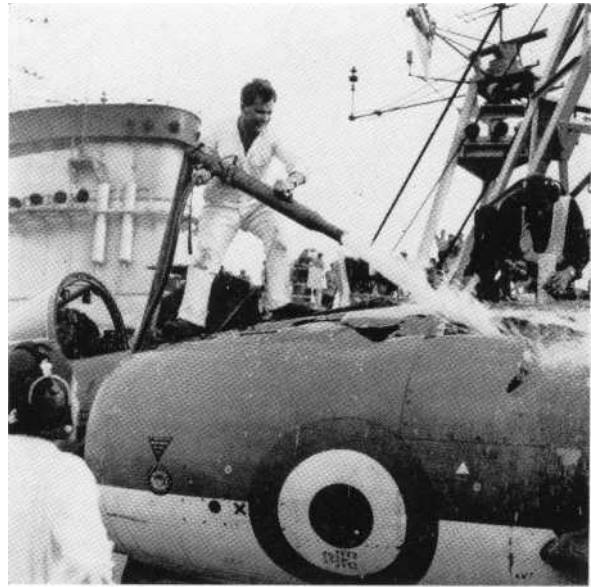
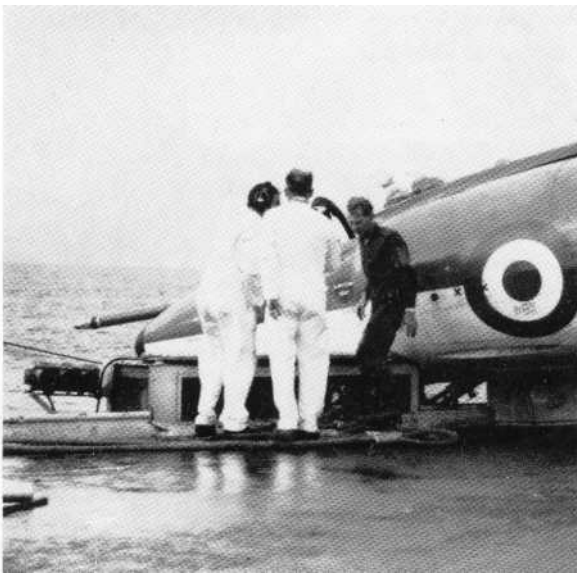
1. Do not sit on the torpedo alarm push, it creates panic on the bridge;
2. Do not drive your MSMB through the Admiral's gangway ladder - you get your leave stopped;
3. Do not drown the training officer too often at the swimming pool - he may be an Admiral one day;
4. Do not lie down in Naval Stores - you will be categorized and stowed away;
5. Do not be found without an excuse - in fact do not be found.

It was in February that they were last seen, leaving to inflict their newly acquired knowledge on the Inshore Flotilla.

EDITORIAL COMMENT. *Several other groups of Midshipmen have come and gone; the similarities are more obvious than the minor differences.*



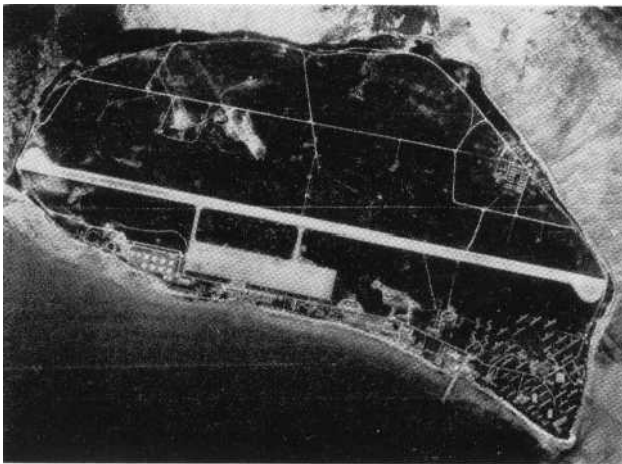
## CRASH ON DECK





*Leaving Singapore for the last time*

## GOING HOME



*The island of Gan*



*Second Beira Patrol*



*Gully-Gully!*



*Last run for Rabbits*



*"Hey Mum - he's home!"*



# Diary of the Commission

1964

## NOVEMBER

- 12th      Recommissioning Ceremony in Devonport Dockyard.
  - 17th      Visit by the Vice Controller, Rear Admiral R. S. Hawkins.
  - 19th      First embarkation of Ship's Flight.
  - 20th      Post Refit Inspection by C.-in-C., Plymouth, Admiral Sir Nigel Henderson.
  - 24th      Sail from Devonport for Sea and Flying Trials.
  - 30th      First arrested landing.
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## DECEMBER

- 4th      Arrive Portsmouth.  
            Visit by C.-in-C., Portsmouth, Admiral Sir Wilfrid Woods.
  - 8th      Depart Portsmouth for Gunnery Trials.
  - 10th     Visit by F.O.N.F.T., Rear Admiral D. C. E. F. Gibson.
  - 11th     Visit by the Minister of Defence for the Navy, Mr. Christopher Mayhew.  
            Christmas Concert.
  - 14th     Arrive Devonport for Christmas leave.
  - 17th     Visit by Principal Under Secretary of State (Navy), Mr. J. P. W. Mallalieu.
  - 18th     Start Christmas leave.
  - 25th     Christmas Day.
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1965

## JANUARY

- 12th      Hoist flag of F.O.A.C., Rear Admiral H. R. B. Janvrin.
  - 14th      Depart Devonport for Work-Up.  
            Embark 890 Squadron and 849C Flight.
  - 16th      Embark 803 and 819 Squadrons.
  - 17th to 25th      Work Up in the Moray Firth.
  - 28th      Arrive Brest.
  - 30th      Children's Party.
  - 31st      Memorial Service for Sir Winston Churchill.
- 

## FEBRUARY

- 1st      Flag of F.O.A.C. transfers to Fort Southwick.
- 2nd      Depart Brest for continuation of Work Up.
- 5th to 7th      At Rosyth.
- 10th     24-hour Operational Readiness Exercise.
- 13th     Arrive Rosyth for Self-Maintenance Period.
- 15th     Visit by F.O.S.N.I., Vice-Admiral Sir David Gregory
- 25th     Depart Rosyth for Operational Readiness Inspection.
- 27th     Hoist flag of F.O.A.C.

## DIARY

### MARCH

- 2nd Operational Readiness Inspection by F.O.A.C.
  - 3rd Arrive Rosyth.
  - 4th C.-in-C., Home Fleet, Admiral Sir Charles Madden embarks.
  - 5th Depart Rosyth for Exercise Pilot Light.
  - 10th Arrive Bergen.
  - 11th C.-in-C., Home Fleet, transfers to H.M.S. *Lion*.
  - 15th Flag of F.O.A.C. transfers to Southwick.  
Depart Bergen for Portsmouth.
  - 16th Disembark Squadrons.
  - 18th Arrive Portsmouth.
  - 20th Children's Party.
  - 22nd Depart Portsmouth for Buccaneer II Trials.
  - 23rd Embark Buccaneer 11 aircraft from Boscombe Down.
  - 24th Visit by Chief of Defence Staff, Field Marshal Sir Richard Hull.
  - 27th Ship's Concert.
  - 29th Visit by First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir David Luce.  
1,000th arrested landing.
  - 31st Disembark Buccaneer aircraft.
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### APRIL

- 1st Visit by the 16th C.E.N.T.O. Military Committee.
  - 2nd Arrive Devonport for Easter leave.
  - 9th Start Easter leave.
  - 18th Easter Day.
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### MAY

- 17th Depart Devonport for Exercises.  
Embark 803, 849C and 890 Squadrons.
  - 19th Visit by F.O.N.F.T., Rear Admiral D.C.E.F. Gibson.
  - 21st Exercise with German Fast Patrol Boats.
  - 23rd Full Power Trial.
  - 25th Disembark Squadrons.
  - 26th Families' Day.  
Arrive Devonport for Pre-Sailing Leave.
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### JUNE

- 12th Children's Party.
- 17th Depart Devonport for Far East Station.  
Embark 803, 815, 849C and 890 Squadrons.
- 22nd to 24th At Gibraltar.
- 26th Flying off Malta.
- 28th Arrive Port Said.
- 29th Transit Suez Canal.

## DIARY

### JULY

2nd to 4th At Aden.  
8th Relieve H.M.S. *Victorious*.  
11th First Three Ship R.A.S.  
19th Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.  
21st Hoist flag of F.O.2, F.E.F., Rear Admiral P. J. Hill-Norton.

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### AUGUST

3rd Flag of F.O.2, F.E.F., transfers to H.M.S. *Falmouth*.  
Hoist flag of F.O.A.C.  
4th Depart Singapore for Flying Exercises.  
6th Flag of F.O.A.C. transfers to Fort Southwick.  
Hoist flag of F.O.2, F.E.F., Vice-Admiral P. J. Hill-Norton.  
4th Singapore declares itself Independent.  
12th Arrive Singapore.  
17th Depart Singapore for Exercise Guardrail.  
18th 2,000th arrested landing.  
23rd to 25th At Subic.

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### SEPTEMBER

4th Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.  
10th Fleet Reception on Flight Deck.  
14th Flag of F.O.2, F.E.F. transfers to H.M.S. *Devonshire*.  
15th Visit by the Commander, F.E.F., Vice-Admiral Sir Frank Twiss.  
Children's Party.  
18th Depart Singapore for Hong Kong.  
26th Arrival at Hong Kong delayed by Tropical Storm Agnes.  
27th Arrive Hong Kong.  
Hoist flag of F.O.2, F.E.F.

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### OCTOBER

1st National Day of Chinese People's Republic.  
Leave restricted; Flight Deck Concert.  
10th National Day of Nationalist China.  
Divisions.  
Leave restricted; Flight Deck Concert.  
12th Depart Hong Kong for Singapore.  
20th Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.  
26th Fleet Cross-Country Championships at H.M.S. *Simbang*.  
29th Captain Fell relieves Captain Griffin in command.  
30th Fleet Boxing Championships at H.M.S. *Terror*.  
31st Fire in "B" Boiler Room.

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### NOVEMBER

7th Flag of F.O.2, F.E.F. transfers to H.M.S. *Devonshire*.  
11th Rhodesia declares itself Independent.  
14th Remembrance Sunday.  
23rd Children's Party.

# DIARY

## DECEMBER

- 7th Depart Singapore for Flying Exercises.
  - 9th Visit by C.-in-C., Far East, Air Chief Marshal Sir John Grandy.
  - 13th Arrive Singapore for change of Feed Water.
  - 17th Depart Singapore for Fremantle.
  - 21st 3,000th arrested landing.
  - 23rd Arrive Fremantle. Official Reception on Flight Deck.
  - 24th Hoist Flag of F.O.2, F.E.F. Children's Party.
  - 25th Christmas Day.
  - 28th Depart Fremantle for Singapore.
  - 31st Flying off the Cocos Islands. Pantomime.
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1966

## JANUARY

- 8th Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.
  - 15th Hoist flag of Rear Admiral C. P. Mills, F.O.2, F.E.F.
  - 27th Depart Singapore for Flying Exercises.
  - 28th Visit by F.O.N.A.C., Vice-Admiral D. C. E. F. Gibson.
  - 30th Full Power Trial.
  - 31st Visit by the Commander, F.E.F., Vice-Admiral Sir Frank Twiss.
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## FEBRUARY

- 1st Sail for Mombasa.
  - 10th to 12th Flying off Gan.
  - 18th Arrive Mombasa for S.M.P.
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## MARCH

- 3rd Depart Mombasa for Mozambique Channel.
  - 5th to 14th Surveillance off Beira.
  - 15th Relief on station by H.M.S. *Eagle*, sail for Singapore.  
Visit by F.O.A.C., Rear Admiral W. D. O'Brien.
  - 19th 4,000th arrested landing.
  - 25th Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.
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## APRIL

- 7th Farewell Reception on Flight Deck.
  - 10th Easter Day.
  - 26th Depart Singapore for points West and for Devonport.
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## MAY

- 2nd to 4th Flying off Gan.
  - 5th Relieve H.M.S. *Eagle*.
  - 8th to 25th Surveillance off Beira.
  - 25th Start passage to Devonport.
  - 31st Anchor off Aden.
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## JUNE

- 4th Transit Suez Canal.
- 13th Arrive Plymouth Sound.
- 16th Start General Service Leave.

"Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage;  
hold fast that which is good; render no man evil for evil;  
strengthen the faint-hearted: support the weak; help the  
afflicted; honour all men; love and serve the Lord,  
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit."