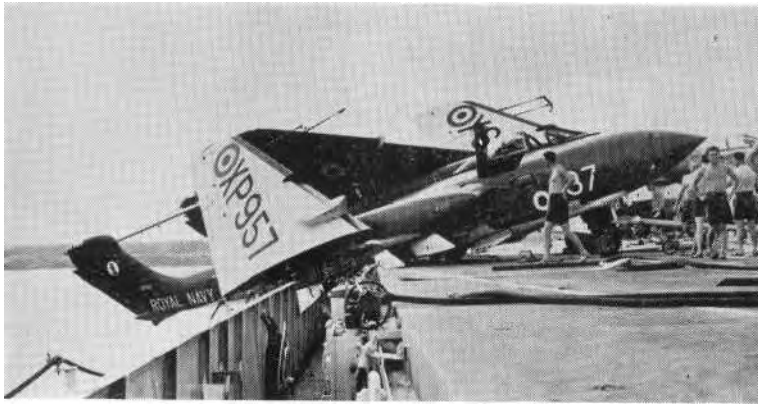
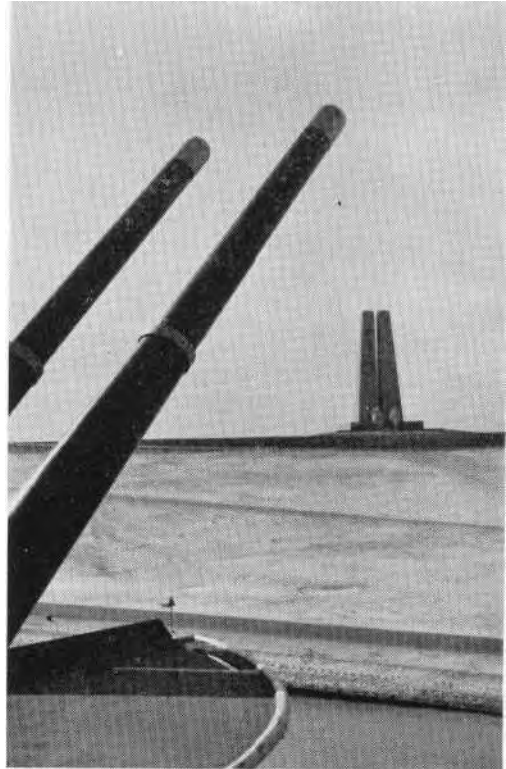


Here and There



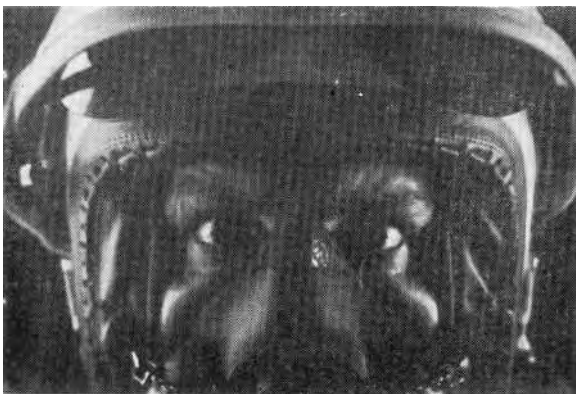
Slipping ashore



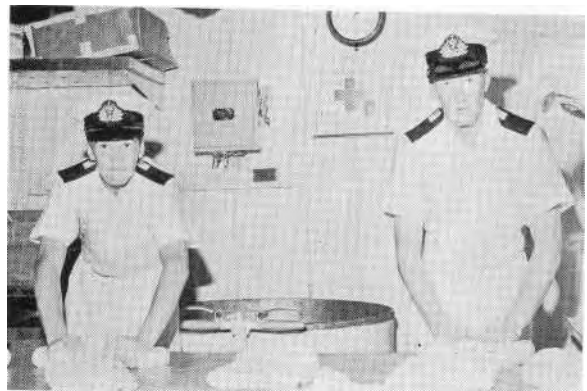
Is this the right way?



5,000th Land-on



What the Radar saw



Not the Tweedy mixer!

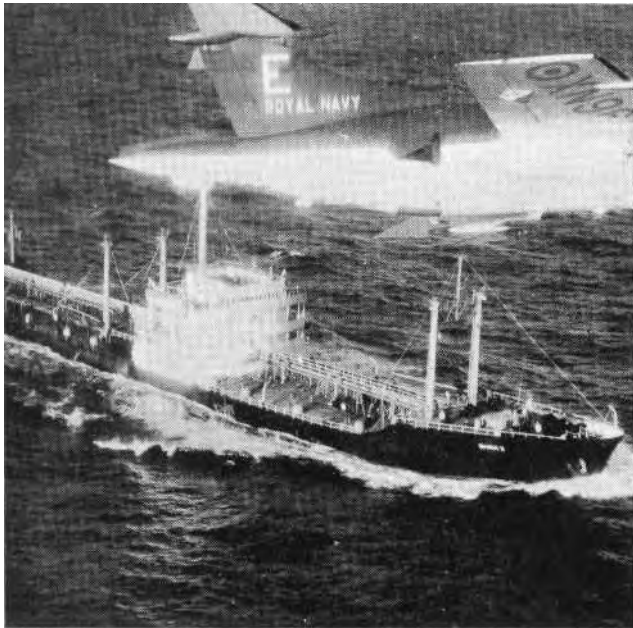


A vast there fellow!! Where are you taking your precious cargo of oil.

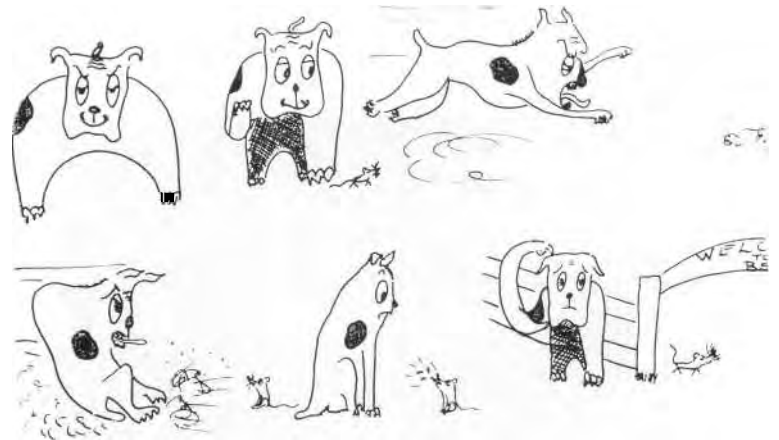
BEIRA PATROL

71 DAYS

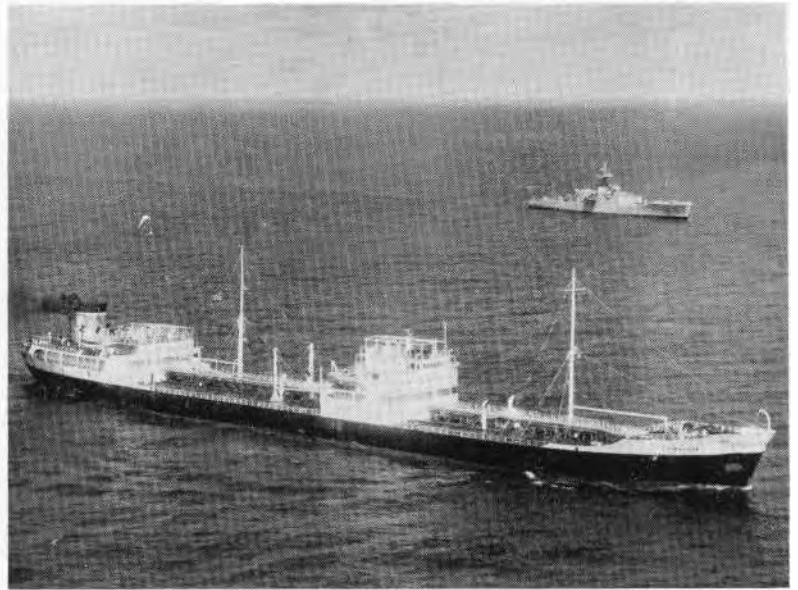
1,070	SORTIES
600,000	MILES FLOWN
200,000	SQUARE MILES SURVEYED EACH DAY
1,000	TONS OF STORES IN DRY RAS
30,000	TONS OF FFO IN LIQUID RAS
17	MILES STEAMED



Joanna V ...

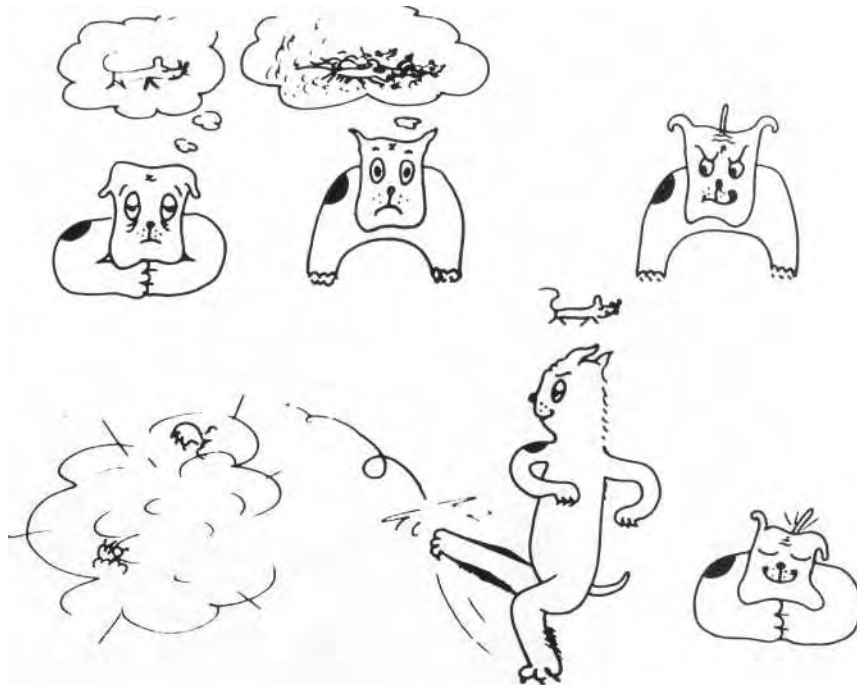


... cocked a snook



Manuella

Esso Spain - in pain



Burned her fingers



800 SQUADRON

LIKE the grey geese we flew out of our northern lair to join EAGLE at the beginning of December 1964. With hardly time to gather breath the ship shot off en-route for Aden and the first work-up, picking up one straggler at Malta on the way. During this passage every engine had to be lifted and inspected and this paved the way for many future problems.

Thirteen days after embarkation we were flying off Aden, an area we were to get to know very well. This time the flying was limited by maintenance problems but we got used to working on and off a flight deck. We also had a good look at the ground terrain so different from the lochs and mountains of Scotland.

Six days of this and the ship was off to Mombasa and the first run ashore. A very good run it proved to be and the friendly relations established were to stand the Squadron in good stead during the subsequent visits. A particularly enjoyable run was the barbecue at Whitesands.

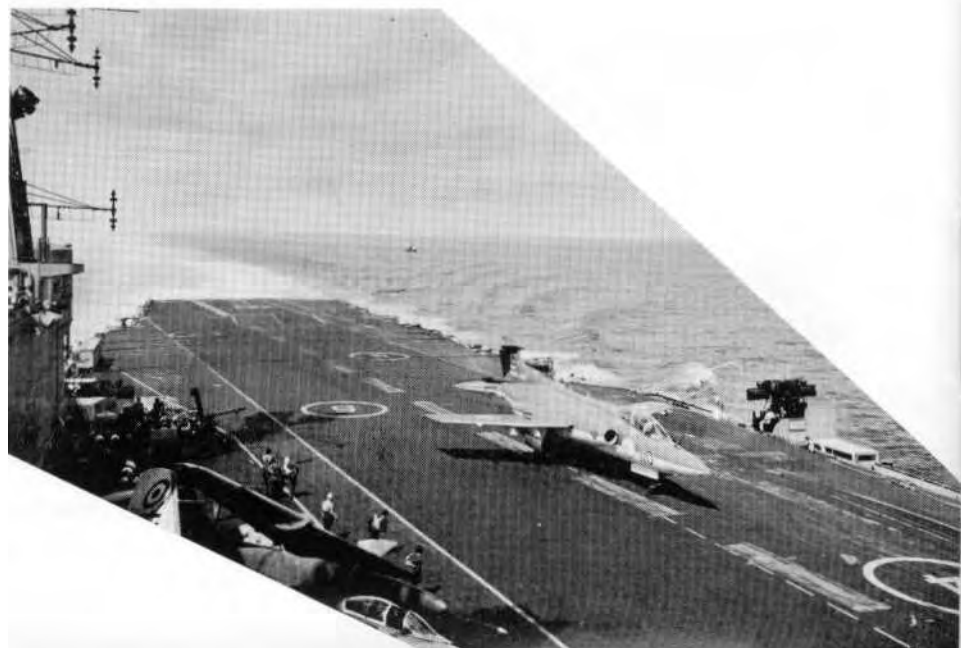
After eleven days of hard playing (instead of the threatened four) it was non-stop to Singapore. While the ship maintained itself there were two weeks at R.A.F. Changi for us with armament practices at China Rock and IFR practices with the Scimitars. One Scimitar took offence at the process and the drogue and hose detached itself from the pod and dealt the Buccaneer a vicious blow across the air brake but fortunately they made it up in good time.

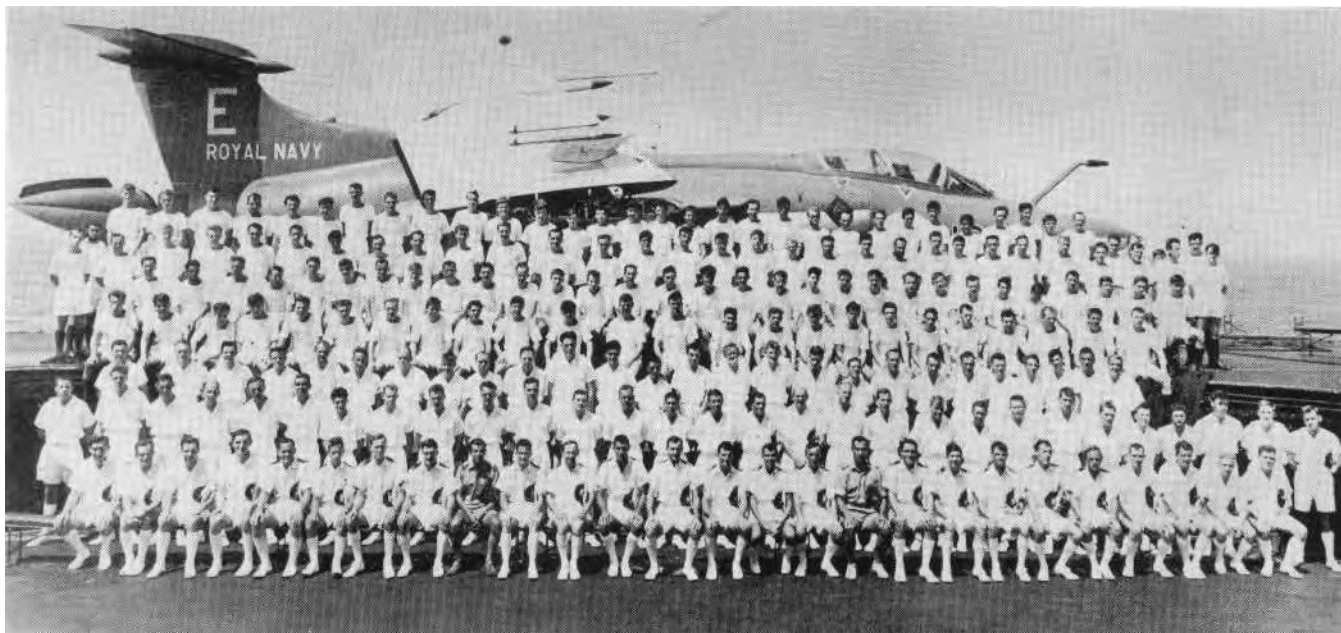
Off at the end of January for the second work up and a chance to prove a Dan Buoy is not a good radar target. However it gave the Fish-heads lots of practice in searching for and picking up small objects from the sea. By the end of this period the three new pilots were used to the deck and all were beginning to feel pretty worked up as the ship sailed for Subic Bay.

This provided an interesting and unusual four days 'rest' in this American 'home from home'. Back at sea, good use was made of the American Air to Ground range. One aircraft however showed a marked reluctance to leave the ground and it was four days before the crew could be convinced that the plane was serviceable and they just had to return on board. Also ashore acting as liaison officer was an 800 pilot who had repeatedly injured his back demonstrating a 'blow off launch' from the top diving board at Changi. After a week's flying we decided we were fully worked up and could celebrate with 18 days in Hong Kong. Celebrate we did and only a pleasantly hazy memory of Squadron parties and occasional sporting 'triumphs'

After an initial spell of private flying to get our hands in again we were ready for Fotex 65. We dropped bombs on VICTORIOUS while the Vixens Tried to stop 801's Buccaneers doing the same to EAGLE. This was great fun except that 801 cheated and flew at night. After a brief banyan at Paulau Langkawi with our oppos from the other Paulau ships, battle recommenced and we were able to show the effectiveness of our low level technique during strikes on Butterworth. To show our versatility we operated the final phase, a supported attack on Langkawi from VICTORIOUS. Before returning to Singapore there was the Showpiece exhibition to V.I.P.'s when we photographed them on top of Flyco and amused them dropping numbers of 1,000 lb bombs.

Back at Changi there was more weapon and navigation practice including low level navigation over the jungle.





Back: EM MORRISON, NAM KNOX, EM BARKER, NAM SCOVELL, NAM RUTTER, NAM SHERRIFF, NAM DAVIES, EM MITCHELL, NAM BENCE, L/STD SIMCOCK, STD MILLER, STD MULLEN, STD BUGEJA, NAM SAUNDERS, REM PAWSEY, NAM TESTER, REM SEAL, LM4 BROWNLOW, LAM BICK, LEM DAVIES, LA BUNN, NAM COVENTRY, NAM JACKSON, NAM MEDDINGS, NAM PUGH, REM BELL, NAM VANSTONE, NA STEVENS, REM HOWARD, NA ADCOCK, LEM DUNCAN, EM PROFFITT; 6th: NAM STEPHENSON, NAM BROWN, LAM GLENNON, REM AVERY, REM DAVISON, LREM GIBBS, LEM ELLISON, STD DAY, NAM REYNOLDS, NA MASON, EM COPELAND, NAM CANNON, REM CLARK, EM CRAIGON, NAM THOMPSON, NAM GOWAN, LAM FROOM, NAM NAYLOR, NAM BULLEN, LAM KANE, NA FOULGER, LAM PALMER, NAM SIDEBOTTOM, LAM PARKER, NAM HARRISON, STD WHITE, NAM WHITEBREAD, REM LA DELL, LA CHALLIS, LAM O'BRIEN, EM KEAY, NA BEARD; 5th: LSA(S) DEANS, NAM SHARPE, LAM HIRST, LAM PATRICK, EM WARDROPE, REM MITCHELL, LAM RYAN, LAM NAISMITH, LAM WADKINS, LAM FREEMAN, LAM ALDRIDGE, EM ELLIS, NAM McCLINTOCK, LAM HAYDEN, EM HAWKINS, NAM BRUCE, LEM MARSHALL, LAM McWILLIAM, NA PHILLIPS, NA ROPER, NA STONES, LA CRUMP, NAM CORNAH, NAM WILSON, NAM MILLS, LREM SHEPHERD, REM CORDERY, LAM GILLIOTT, NAM GORDON, LREM NICHOLSON; 4th: NAM EDWARDS, CK(S) LEONARD CK(S) KINLEYSIDE, CK(S) WILDER, LAM PURCELL, EM METCALFE, LAM McNEILL, NA BRACKENBURY, NAM BROWN, NAM BATE, NAM JAMES, LAM CANE, LAM McDONALD, NAM JOHNSTON, L/WTR PENNELL, STD NELSON, STD CAMPBELL, STD THOMPSON, EM THOMPSON, NAM AMSCHL, LAM JOHNSTON, LEM GREEN, LAM HOLMES, LEM COPPER; 3rd: AA1 CULLUM, CAF WRAY, RLM1 BARRATT, POEL WILLIAMS, REA1 TAYLOUR, AM2 GUNN, AM1 BRIGGS, AA1 HIGGS, AM1 CODLING, CAF JORDAN, AM2 BINGHAM, AA2 HOCKING, REA2 FRENCH, REA2 PRIVETT, REA2 LIDDLE, REA1 CURRY, POREL WOELFELL, POREL WHITING, POREL WATSON, EA2 BENNETT, EA2 BALLANTYNE, POAF ELLIOTT, EA1 DEACON, RLM2 WOOLLEY, POAF PESCAGLINI, POEL FLYNN; 2nd: POREL PLUMMER, EA1 RALPH, POEL MADIGAN, AM1. CORNALL, CEL BLAKE, REA2 SARGENT, EA2 JONES, AA1 HEARL, AA1 THOMAS, CAF GRIFFITHS, CAF LAMBERT, REA2 BREESE, CREL BUTLER, POREL MEADES, REA1 PIERCE, EA1 CHADWICK, EA1 HUMPHRIES, CREL TOWLE, EA2 LASHBROOKE, POAF McALLISTER POAF SMITH, EA2 WILSON, LM1 YOUNG AA2 PETTITT, AA1 WILSON, POREL RICH, AM2 PEARSON, AND KERLEY, POAF GEE; Front: AM1 COLE, CAF WRIGHT, CREL MECH SETTERFIELD, CAM LAMBERT, S/LT RAWBONE, S/LT COX, S/LT BRITTAIN, S/LT THOMPSON, FLT/LT PITCHFORK, LT PEARCE, LT CDR WILKINSON, LT CDR HOWARD, LT CDR GILES (CO), LT CDR CUTLER, LT CDR HELLIWELL, SILT SECKER, FLT/LT SMART, LT BICKLEY, LT DALRYMPLE-SMITH, LT BROWN, S/LT MASON, S/LT MARTIN, CAA WOOD, EA1 HATCHER, CEL POWELL, AM1 GEE.

By the 21st May we were back on board for the staged return to U.K. A brief spell at Aden for more exercises and a little rabbiting and then back through the Canal. There was still time for a short lesson in the low level strike technique for the R.A.F. in Cyprus and a run ashore in Beirut; it is rumoured that the Casino there has asked M.O.D.(N) not to send Steve Park there again. After this a short stay in Malta followed by the flight back to U.N. With the aid of 800B two aircraft managed to fly direct to Lossiemouth while the remainder stopped off at Yeovilton. It only took four more days for the ground and aircrew to arrive and the first leg was over.

With the second leg in August came many new faces including ones from the U.S.N. and another from the R.A.F. Everybody quickly settled into the flying routine and were soon hard at it with an initial three days off Gibraltar followed by eleven days off Malta. This got all the old hands deck qualified and the old ones started night flying. Sicily was used for low level attack practice and this gave one crew an opportunity to divert to Sigonella. The aircrew and groundcrew were reticent about their four day stay but it appears they were well looked after by the U.S.N.

The well earned ten days in Malta included a good run to that old favourite Jimmy Dowdells. An evening particularly enjoyed by the Senior Pilot who won ten bottles of beer by removing an observer's shirt without displacing his jacket.

After Malta the first crisis of the leg had us rushed to Aden once more. Here an intensive eight days flying had the pot boiling in all our roles, including double sorties with the aid of 800B. Here too we had the misfortune to lose a Buccaneer when after a double proportioner failure, Chase and Markley, the U.S.N. crew, had to part company through the canopy. The pilotless Buccaneer then gave people on the flight deck anxious moments as it playfully did a last run over the ship before deciding to ditch.

The ten day break in Mombasa gave the Squadron time to renew old acquaintances and start new ones. In between maintenance, social visits, runs to the game park and a Squadron barbecue it was farewell to Chris Mather and hail Chuck Giles the new C.O.

Back at Aden once more and the 'spares' problem loomed large again. It didn't stop us dropping bombs and firing rockets by day and by night however nor flying the well worn low level routes. Nine days of this and the ship was off and by the 11th November we were once more back in Changi. Hardly had we time to smooth ourselves into the familiar comfy corners before being hauled back on board for a long mystery trip. Although most of the one third change of personnel had been completed some on board had an anxious time as their reliefs scurried over the Indian Ocean in breathless search.

After three weeks with no flying it was finally decided to let the R.A.F. sort out Africa while the ship returned to its old stamping ground at Aden. Here yet again conditions were ideal for getting back into flying trim; low level navigation, and night weapon practice and the usual long range strikes. Arguments are still ranging with the Vixens as to how many strikes got through and the ethics of flying 70 miles at 200 knots under an air route.

820 SQUADRON



1933 Squadron formed with Fairey III F's and Blackburn Shark Torpedo Bombers. Served mainly in H.M.S. COURAGEOUS.

1939 Hunted GRAF SPEE from ARK ROYAL. Later took part in Malta and Atlantic convoys and the sinking of the BISMARCK.

1944 Attack on TIRPITZ using Barracudas.

Subsequently the Squadron flew Avengers, Fireflies, Gannets and Whirlwind helicopters.

September 1964 Squadron commissioned with Westland Wessex HAS Mk 1 helicopters at R.N.A.S. Culdrose.



SO THE present phase began with two aircraft and no pilots though by November it had its full complement of 8 Wessex and pilots who had returned from 'loan drafts' to 814 and 815 squadrons in the Far East.

The work-up preceded at Culdrose and Portland and on the 26th October the first physical contact was made with EAGLE when six aircraft joined for a week's A/S exercises. This was a particularly fruitful period because first (squadron to) come first served; the visit was not allowed to pass unnoticed. The final phase of the work-up, the short range transport role, was now completed at Culdrose. This done, the squadron was ready to 'go' and after a week's leave if flew on board EAGLE on 1st December 1964.

The eight aircraft were disposed two in the SAR role, four in the Sonar role and two were reduced to FCR status. The fast passage to east of Suez prevented much demonstration of flying talents but other abilities were deployed. The 'A' team won the deck hockey tournament while the 'B' team reached the semi-final. At Aden the rotors could be tested in earnest and prowess was proved by transporting a 105 mm howitzer trustingly loaned by the R.A. Again at Mombasa our mettle was demonstrated by a ferrying trip to Nairobi 240 miles with a climb of 7,000 feet -- the first time by a helicopter.

The trip to Singapore provided an opportunity for the SAR aircraft to perform its first mission of mercy. A seaman with a pain in his tum was brought from the tanker 'WORLD PEGASUS' to the ship. A successful operation was subsequently performed by the ship's doctors.



I'll sign the chit

Singapore brought an active spell ashore at R.N.A.S. SEMBAWANG. Apart from maintenance for both men and machines there was a real live submarine, H.M.S. ANDREW, to give the Squadron exercise in its main role. Nearly all the aircrew were introduced to the problems of jungle survival at the R.A.F. Survival School and a party of seven officers after a short course at the Jungle Warfare School, braved the jungle for a night. Those remaining were forced to suffer the depredations of 'Fred' a small monkey. In addition to swiping food from the table he proved partial to beer and rapidly developed into an alcoholic.

Back at sea the time was spent mainly in ASW exercises. On the 1st February the SAR crew had a 'live' exercise when a man fell overboard and was duly returned safely on board. Exercises continued to Hong Kong and still the Squadron was in demand. Assistance was given to



The team spirit

shooting a sequence from a French film and a 3 ton generator was moved piecemeal from Kai Tak to White Cliffs to power a new ILS and 'homing' aid. Naturally in Hong Kong entertainment had its places with a Squadron 'run' at the China Fleet Club complete with a most amusing Chinese Cabaret. Later a Ferry-boat party complete with food, drink and music set a 'must' precedent for Hong Kong visits.

Fotex in March proved both disappointing because of the small amount of A/S practice and tragic with the loss of two crew members and two aircraft on consecutive days. As a result of this all Wessex flying was suspended until some essential modifications had been completed and the Squadron had an usual spell of shore service at SEMBAWANG. Here they proved that though bowed they were unbeaten.

Back on board for a fast passage home which just left time for some valuable A/S exercises in the Mediterranean



Is it still friendly ?

with the LEONARDO DA VINCI. On the 24th May the Squadron disembarked to CULDROSE for more training and exercising in preparation for the second leg.

On the 24th August the Squadron was back on board and heading for the Far East once again. This passage was to have included a fairly lengthy anti-submarine exercise period in the Mediterranean but trouble in Aden squeezed most of this out of the programme. It did leave time for an interesting if brief exercise with the nuclear submarine U.S.S. HADDO and her conventional partner SEA ROBIN. At Aden the Squadron was in great demand to assist with internal security measures. This mainly involved whisking troops to trouble spots in and around Aden and the aircraft became targets for occasional brickbats though no hits were registered. The SAR teams scored a notable triumph when the crew had to eject from a defective Buccaneer. Both were back on board before the plane hit the water. Another spell at Mombasa provided rest and pleasant recreation. Many of the aircrew managed to get to Nairobi and some braved the heights of Kilimanjaro. Another shot enough guinea fowl to provide the main course for a Squadron dinner. Back at Aden a more interesting taxi service was required; flying F.A.C. teams to various places in the notorious Radfan area.

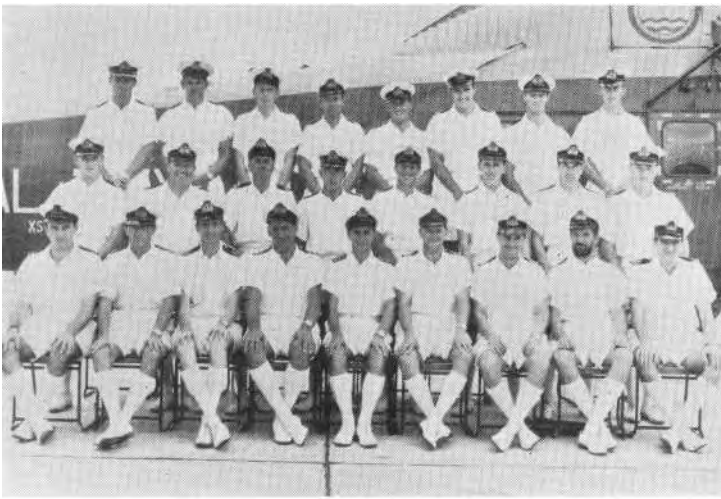


We dance too

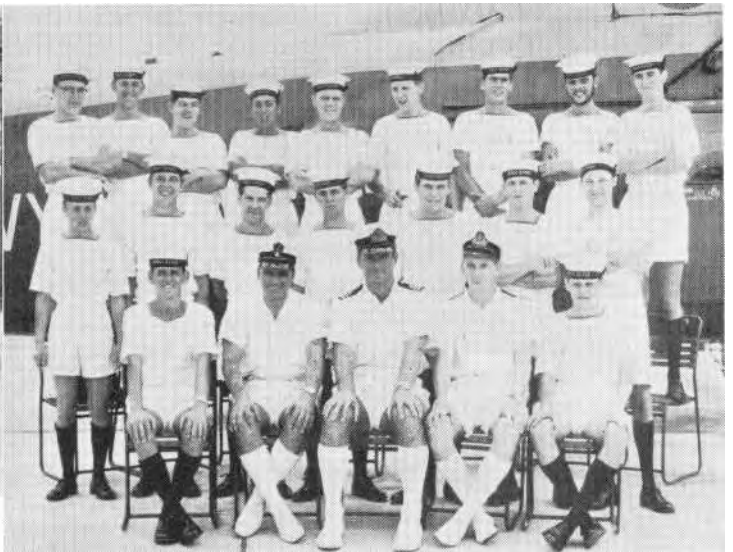


What ho ... the AEO

SQUADRON OFFICERS



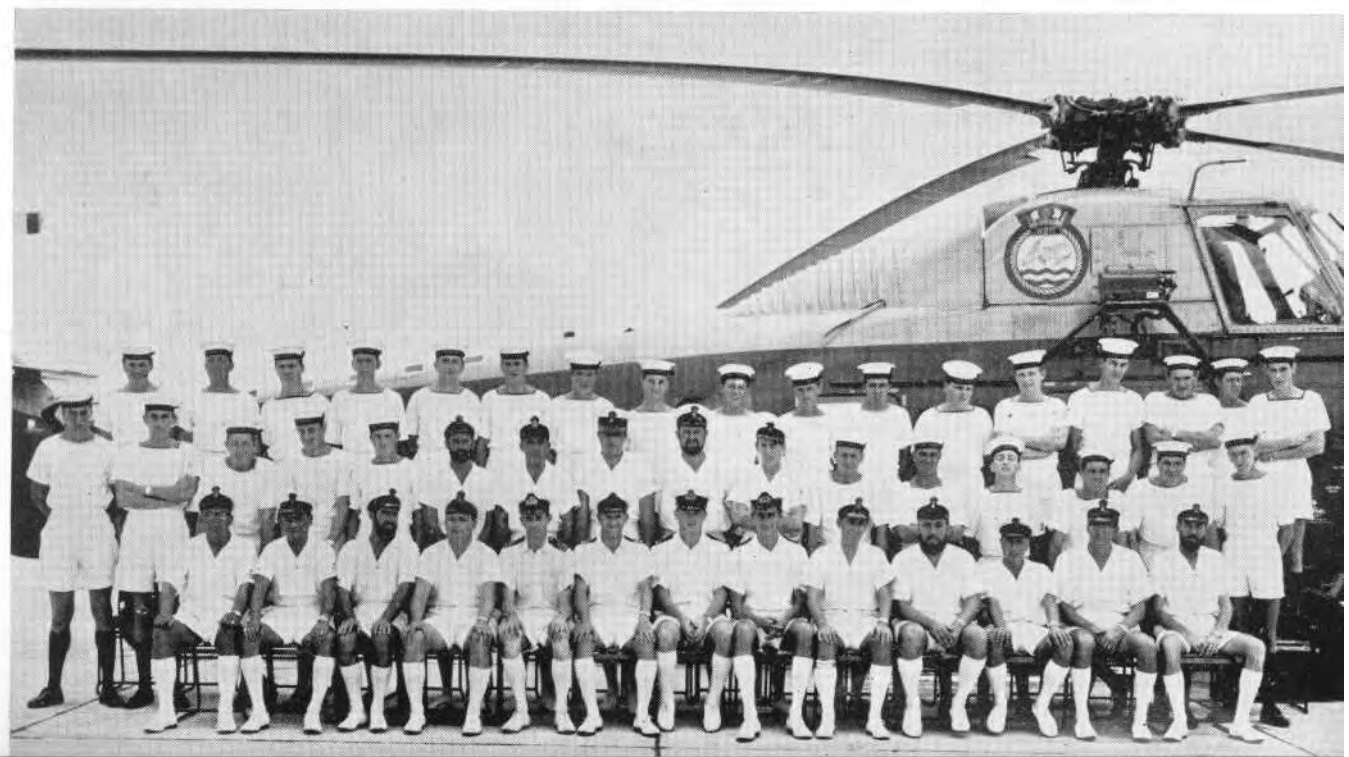
SUPPLY & SECRETARIAL,
AIRCRAFT HANDLERS DIVISION



ELECTRICAL & RADIO DIVISION



A. E. & O. DIVISION



800B FLIGHT



Back: LAM SHARP, NAM REED EMA TEASDALE, EMA BLUNN, LEM STENTIFORD, LREM WILLIAMS, REM COCHRANE, LAM ASKEW, LAM MERRY; *3rd:* LAM MARSHALL, EMA SIM, LREM BIRD, LREM TILLEY, REM PORTER, NAM WATTS, NAM CASSON, NAM LEVITT, NAM HUGHES, NAM COLLINGWOOD, NAM HALL, NAM TOWERT; *2nd:* LAM CAMP, EMA ELDRIDGE, AA2 HOLMES, EA2 O'BRIEN, POAF LAWSON, POAF LUCKETT, POAF ROBERTS, AA2 SANSOM, POAF BARRON, POAF CHAPMAN, POAF LANDER, A/POREL SAVAGE, A/POEL FRENCH; *Front:* CAF SCOTT, EA2 SIMS, ENG/SUB LT (AEO) DAYSH, LT (SP) WARING, LT CDR (CO) GRIER REES, LT McMANUS. (A/STAFF OFFICER, SHIPS STAFF), LT SD (AV) WILSON, CEA SAYERS, AM1 PHILLIPS .

A. E. & O. DIVISION

Back: LAM KNIGHT, LAM EASTON, NAM LILLEY, NAM WRAXALL, NAM MASSEY, NAM LIFE, NAM BISHOP, NAM BAIN, NAM WILLIAMS, NAM TRIPP, NAM LOVALL, NAM MORRIS, LAM MALONEY, NAM BROUGH, LAM MOORSE, NAM STANDRING, NAM WHITE; *Centre:* NAM HUTCHINGS, LAM SAUNDERS, NAM BENHAM, LAM SMART, LAM HOLLEY, CAF HAKEN, AM1 BURRETT, AA2 CAREY, POAF TICKNER, POAF CAMERON, NAM JESSETT, LAM ARUNDELL, LAM HAGGARTY, NAM O, REGAN, LAM DICKSON, NAM PRESTON; *Front:* POAF BERTRAM, AM2 DE FELICE, AA1 HORTON, LT (O) WALSH, RN LT CDR SELLEY, RN LT (P) CLARKE, S/LT (P) POLAND, CAA JONES, AM2 WALDIE, AM1 DAVEY, POAF DOCKETT, CAF HAWTHORN.

SQUADRON OFFICERS

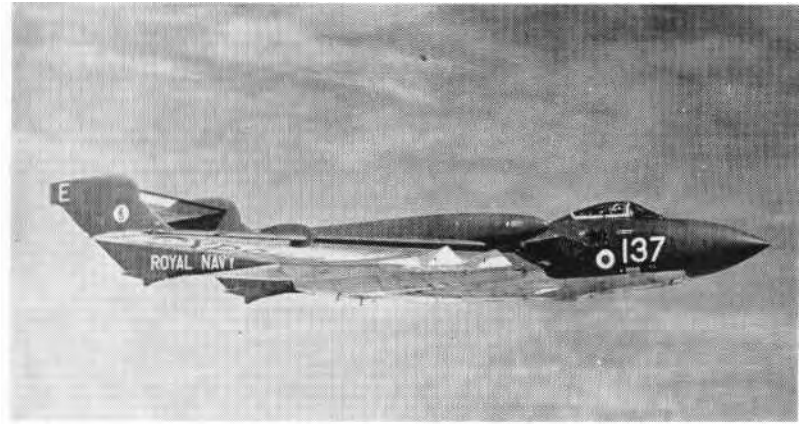
Back: LT CJ CRAIG, LT AN WIGLEY, LT R HUGHES, LT J CLEMENTS, LT RJ FISHER, LT RE WARD, SUB LT A BOWER, SUB LT J POLAND; *Centre:* SUB LT M BURNETT, SUB LT G HOLMES, SUB LT PF DUNFORD, SUB LT B PALMER, LT KH RONALDSON, SUB LTD PEARSE, LT A SUGGITT, LT BE CLARKE; *Front:* LT ME PURSE, LT CL MacGREGOR, LT A WALSH, LT CDR M HARVEY, LT CDR DC SMITH, LT CDR C. SELLEY, LT CDR G THOMAS, LT A PEEBLES, LT M PRINGLE.

SUPPLY & SECRETARIAL, AIRCRAFT HANDLERS DIVISION

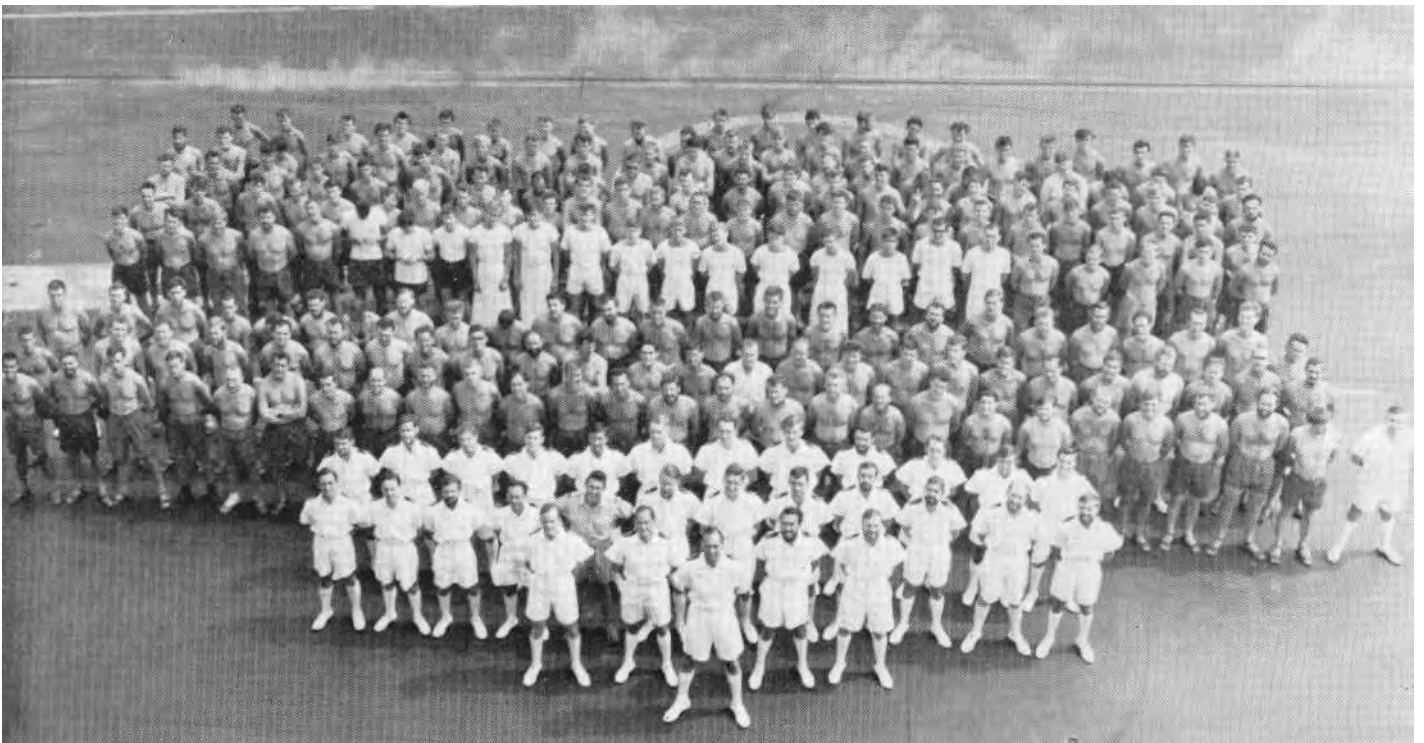
Back: L/WTR THOMAS, STWD POPHAM, STWD McGUFFIE, LAAH2 MOTH, LASE1 CURRAN, STWD CLIFFE, NAAH3 BROWN, STWD ANDERSON, NAAH3 KENNEDY; *Centre:* J/A/STWD READ, STWD HARDIMAN, STWD FRASER, NAAH3 TIMMINS, STWD HORWOOD, L/STWD RYAN LSA (S) HESLINGTON; *Front:* STWD FARRALL, PO (A) AH1 FRICKER, LT (P) CRAIG, RN LT (P) HUGHES, RN J/NAAH3 McTAGGART.

ELECTRICAL & RADIO DIVISION

Back: LREM DUCKWORTH, LREM WILDMAN, A/LEM BUTTLE LEM TUCKWELL, EM (A) ARTHURS, LEM WHITE, EM (A) EDWARDS LEM PALLANT, EM (A) WATKINS, EM (A) SULLIVAN, REM CRANE, EM (A) BELL; *Centre:* LEM ANDERSON, LREM HARPER, LREM DAVIDSON, POREL LANEY POREL HELSBY, EL MECH STEVENSON, REA2 DAY, POEL CARD, EA2 COOLEDDGE, REM HUNT, REM HOMEWOOD, REM WARREN; *Front:* C REL NORMAN, REA2 BARNETT, REM MOORE, REA1 MEADOWS, CEA WOOD, LT (P) WIGLEY, RN LT CLEMENTS, RN SILT DUNFORD RN EA1 SHARP, POEL BARR, EA1 KENDALL, EL MECH HUDSON.



899 SQUADRON



THE Navy's most up-to-date carrier has the distinction of having amongst its complement of aircraft a squadron of the Navy's most up-to-date all weather day and night fighters; 899, in fact, was the first Fleet Air Arm squadron to receive the Mk 2 Sea Vixen, with its much improved weapon system and fuel capacity.

Because we had already been in existence for a couple of years as Headquarters squadron, equipped with Vixen I's, the transition to front-line status was not marked by a formal commissioning ceremony with its attendant pomp and circumstance, instead we made do with a church service held in a hangar on a particularly foul day. Those who were there will not forget the pre-service galloping back and forth between car-park and hangar which the shortage of umbrellas caused.

The problems surrounding our elevation to the front-line peerage were eased by the fact that many of the old H.Q. personnel had volunteered to stay with the squadron in its new form. There was available, therefore, a nucleus of both flying and maintenance experience with which to get the show on the road. The previous C.O.'s, Lieutenant Commanders "Shorty" Hamilton and "Sandy" Sanderson might well be proud of the team they had bequeathed to the new boss, Commander Matthews.

Embarkation, as is traditionally the case, was organised chaos (Fleet Work Study Teams Numbers 1 -5 please note). However time was on our side as we were not called upon to do any flying until the ship reached Aden two and a half weeks later. Thereafter the first (short) leg of the commission went placidly enough: little incident, much hard work and a measure of socialising. Our tame Kiwi, Lieutenant Derral Barnes was never stuck for ideas with which to break the monotony. He masterminded almost all the banyans, brewery runs and socials which became features of our stops along the Aden, Mombasa, Singapore, Subic, Hong Kong bus route.

One piece of unrehearsed entertainment was the excellent attempt at a "Square-wheel" landing made by Lieutenant John Eagle off Subic Bay. It didn't quite come off, but he made a very pretty bolter and landed safely at NAS Cubi Point with his main wheels neatly shaved down almost to the axles. He was to be seen for some time after this groping around the ship sporting dark glasses and an air of anonymity. His observer has never been the same man since.

At Hong Kong we had a squadron party; music provided by Her Majesty's Royal Marines and a cabaret. The talent and energy displayed by some more senior members of the management after dinner provided both entertainment and a reminder of the physical standards demanded of aircrew by present day jet aircraft.

We disembarked twice during this first leg, once each to Tengah and Changi. Both times we 'sucked' into the air defence of Singapore machine, and spent long periods sitting in a series of tents waiting to be 'scrambled'. On one occasion somebody was sent howling off into the dusk, but the suspicious contact turned out to be a Malaysian Airways Herald minding its own business. Easter came and went unnoticed during the second of these spells of earnest inactivity. but disappointment at the lack of time off was partly made up for by the knowledge that we had done all that was asked of us.

The first leg seemed to pass so quickly that before we could get our ground equipment sorted out (another story) we were back at Yeovilton being asked "Weren't you supposed to be going away somewhere?" Soon incidents such as the D.A.E.O. marching briskly



The Rip



backwards into the port catwalk were mere memories, and already a third of the squadron groundcrew, as well as several aircrew founder-members, was on its way. Commander Matthews was relieved by Lieutenant Commander "Rip" Kirby (were we to lose influence?) the AEO by Griffin (from, of all places, R.A.F. Technical Training Command). It was at this time too that we welcomed a genuine Air Force infiltrator McCluney, whom we are still navalising slowly but surely. A heavy CWP programme, an increase in aircraft complement from 12 to 15, the annual circus known euphemistically as Air Day, a few days leave, and we braced ourselves for the briny once again.

The second leg bears little comparison to the leisurely jaunt which went before, "Showpiece" and the O.R.I. notwithstanding. The squadron's unofficial motto became A.B.C. (its All Been Changed). Nothing seemed destined to go according to plan: Sailing date? ABC; Athens? ABC; Naples? ABC; Canal Date? ABC; Two weeks ashore at Changi? ABC; Hong Kong for Christmas? HYL (Haven't You Learnt?). In fact ABC soon became ABCD (All Bound to be Changed Daily).

Indeed Christmas found us almost on the other side of the world from Hong Kong, in our old haunt of Mombasa. We owed this diversion to the Rhodesian crisis, which succeeded the Aden crisis as a magnet with which to draw carriers (yes there was another one) to the Arabian Sea. This Rhodesian crisis put 899 very much in the limelight onboard, if not in the popular press, where we were described as Eagle's "other aircraft." For several days we were at short notice to fly into Zambia en bloc, although at the time few people were allowed to know why twelve Vixens were ranged, fuelled, armed and loaded to bursting point with stores. Perhaps others guessed what was in the wind when they saw aircrew members packing grips and drawing jungle-greens. We were eventually stood down because 29 Squadron (Javelins) R.A.F. obtained the diplomatic clearance they needed to do the job. Before the switch the A.E.O. was seen gyrating round the ship enveloped in a mental fog.

One result of the rather abortive period was the unfortunate disruption of the second changeover schedule. Good-natured ribbing turned into genuine sympathy for the unfortunate third of the squadron groundcrew involved as farewell party succeeded farewell party, and first Butterworth, next Gan and finally Mombasa faded over the horizon. It was now that even the stock joke of the first leg, "above all keep a sense of humour", became a bit strained, especially as one was unable to keep the folks at home in the (somewhat confused) picture. The reliefs caught us up in Aden however, after an equally wild chase across the Indian Ocean, and the homeward-bounders were at last released.

One of the greatest obstacles in front-line squadron life is the problem of bridging the inevitable mental gulf that exists between aircrew and groundcrew. Perhaps it is the rigid demarcation of responsibility that makes it difficult for the two sections of the squadron community to make contact certainly the continual changing of personnel that goes on doesn't help. Whatever

That makes it `500'



the cause, the effect is to be regretted, because the lives of the aircrew depend so entirely on the standards of the groundcrew whilst the end-product of all that groundcrew sweated labour is success achieved in the air by the pilots and observers. For this reason it meant a lot to everybody when the whole squadron, from the C.O. downwards turned out to smarten up the aircraft before the ship entered Mombasa. Aircrew costume on this occasion had to be seen to be believed, and the very fact of them sweating it out and sharing a limers bucket with the serfs generated a reservoir of good humour which will take some time to dissipate. In Mombasa a joint officers/senior ratings P.U. held at the Manor Hotel was unanimously voted the best of its kind for a long time by those who could remember any details of it afterwards. It was rumoured at the time that the old man of the squadron, a certain Chief Air Fitter (of course) was the last to return on board, but be that as it may, relations between air and ground members were certainly cemented as a result of this marathon. Another affair was the carol service at Christmas time. We even had a Christmas tree to sing around, our old friend 134, suitably and tastefully decorated for the occasion.

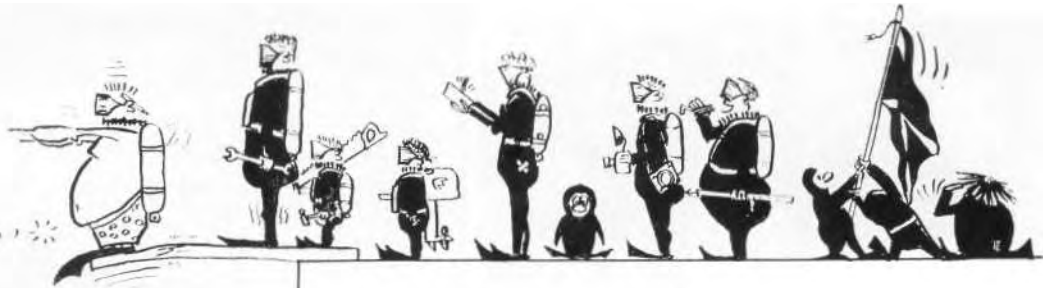
One remembers with a variety of emotions some of the more colourful characters who have served in 899 during the commission. Perhaps a cartoonist could best capture for posterity the personalities of the Chin. Dusty the Egg, Curly Platts, Pat O'Brien, John D, John Eagle. Rip Kirby, Ron Whiting, Mr. Bumble, Ginger Shaw and a host of others. It is not of course, true, despite a recurrent buzz, that there is a special wing at Netley for ex-899-ers, but we certainly have one or two takers for both Reg. Chief and Librarian there.

Perhaps one of the strongest elements in the squadron has been our first-class bunch of killicks. Their steady and sensible attitude to the job has been invaluable as an example to the many very young and inexperienced ratings whose first ship and first squadron this is. When one considers their prospects of advancement. these leading hands, most of whom could hardly be called "lads" any more, have been a tower of strength.

As we go to press the third changeover is almost upon us. Thus there will have been a complete change of personnel by the time we return to U.K. except for a few very few, head-cases who have elected to recommission the squadron. The story is far from finished, and with the state of the world as it is today what is yet to come may well overshadow what has been. We can but hope that whatever lies ahead of us will be dealt with in the usual 899 style, with verve and elan, and the inevitable sigh of "It's all happening, me old."

1st: LT CDR KIRBY; *2nd:* LT CDR HOLLEY, LT CDR GRIFFIN, LT BAILEY, LT CDR McQUEEN; *3rd:* LT MORRIS, LT COMBER. LT ALDRED. SUB LT MUNRO, FLT LT McCLUNEY, LT WOODFORD, LT PLUMTREE, LT DUNLOP, LT CHILD, LT SHEARING, LT KINCH, SUB LT KENDALL; *4th:* SUB LT BROCK, SUB LT HARRIS, LT ARGYLE, LT HICKLING, SUB LT PARKER, LT PERRYMAN, LT SPEAR, SUB LT PARRETT, SUB LT JAGO, LT PINNEY, SUB LT BROADWATER, SUB LT FLETCHER; *5th:* POAF O'CONNOR, POAF LANHAM, POAF GOODMAN, POAF WELLINGTON, POEL CULL, CAF CLEGHORN, POAF TOVEY, AM1 FLOWERS AA1 VELLA, CAF GILLARD, CREA LLEWELLYN, AM1 DUNN, AA1 BUTLER EA1 HOVER, AA2 HARPER, POEL LOWTHER, CAM STAMFORD, CELM ROGERS, CEL LACH-SZYRMA, AM1 DAVIS, REA2 BLAND, REA2 DOMINY, AA1 CARTWRIGHT, POEL ROBB, REA2 AKAM, AA1 NEWMAN, CA PEMBERTON; *6th:* AA2 WILLIAMS, POAF MAIL, POAF BEATTY, REA2 MARKE, AA1 O'BRIEN, AM2 STANLEY, CEA WELLER. POEL DODSON EA1 NEWNHAM, REA2 SHELFER, RELM1 WATKINS, POEL.. FITCHETT, POEL O'SULLIVAN, POSTD COPELAND, EA1 WELLS, POAF RUSHWORTH, EA2 WAIN, EA1 PAYNE, RELM2 HEAD, CAA ROSE. AA2 SILVERSON, AM1 BROOKS, AA1 CHURCHILL, CAF HUGHES, AA1 JERRAM; *7th:* POAF REFFOLD, AA2 WAREHAM, POAF ROLFE, POAF BULL, EA2 ARTHUR, AA2 GUNN, CAF GEORGE, AA2 SWORD, REA2 DOWNS, AN OTHER, POREL SIMMONDS, REM2 VERHOEST, POAF THOMAS, ELM3 GERRARD, EA2 WORNELL, POREL BOYES, POREL ASHLEY, RELM3 COOMBES, REA2 JOHNSON, POAF BLAGG, ELM 3 MADDOCK, EA2 KIMBER, REA2 DUNLEAVY, EA2 BAKER, CAF COUSINS; *8th:* NAM SMEETON, LAM HARRIS, NAM SKIPPER, NAM LOWERY. LREM BURT, STD PATTERNOTTE, STD BURTON, CK SLENDER, CK COLES, CK DOYLE, STD BENVILLE, STD MacLAREN, L/STD STUART, STD TOLHURST, STD HUTTON, CK PAYNE. STD NEALE, STD WOOD, L/WTR COOMBES, LAM SMILLIE, NAM WALKER, REM KRELLE, NAM OGILVIE, NAM JACKSON; *9th:* LA DAVIES, NAM MOORE, NAM MORGAN, NAM STAVELY, NAM MILNER, NAM PRITCHARD, NAM HODGES. LAM PLATTS, NA PEARTON, NA YOUNG, NAM FERGUSON, LAM REED, LREM BURNS, LEM HOLLYWELL, NAM LONGLEY, LAM PLEAVIN. LAM WEBSTER, NAM GRANGE. EMA WYNN, NAM POYNTER, LAM MORETON, NAM WHITE, REM FINNIGAN, LAM WEBB, LAM HARVEY, LAM HATCHER; *10th:* LA GORGE, LAM TRICKER, NAM HARRISON, NAM LEARY, NAM MURTAPH, LAM BAILEY, LAM SMITH, LAM SHARPE, NAM SHAW, LAM EVANS, STD McTAGUE, LAM DEMPSTER, NAM BRISTOW, NAM BARANSKI, LEM RICE, REM MARTIN, NAM MORTON, AN OTHER, NAM PEARN, REM BIRD, NAM KINGSLEY, REM BAILEY; *11th:* NAM WILLS, REM NEWLAND, EMA CAMERON, NA SINCLAIR, NAM BARKER, LAM ROBINSON, LAM SMITHERS, NAM ROBERTS, EMA WITT, REM MOOREHEAD, LREM MacDONALD, AN OTHER, AN OTHER, LEM CADDEL, NAM BURKE, LAM HILL, LAM DOOLEY. EMA GRAY, NAM HUGHES, AN OTHER, EMA WESTRAY; *12th:* NAM ROBERTSON. NAM BROWN, LEM HIGHAM, NA VINTEN, NA HADFFILD, NAM SALT, REM HOLDEN, REM WILLS, NA BOURN, LSA BRAY, EMA WELLINGTON. EMA CALDWELL, NAM FIELD, LAM BURKE, LAM GILBERT, LAM KELLY, NAM GORE, EMA GIBSON, REM BLACKMAN, REM WILLIS, LAM FRISBY, LAM BRUTON; *13th:* NAM WILCOCK, REM HAMLIN. NAM PARSONS, LAM HOWLETT, LAM BUCKLAND. LAM WEBB.

12 DECK



AND BELOW



Diving



DONT forget the diver! If you had it might have been a very different commission.

It started quietly enough. While the ship did her timed run over the measured mile at Arran we had our own run at Brodick Bay. Amongst the trophies was a large lobster which found its way to the Captain's table and therefore gave the EDT 'one blast in hand'. Before returning to the ship, Spraggy (Lieut. Cdr. Spragg to the uninitiated) accused each in turn of stealing his gym shoes - they had not been seen for 48 hours! They were found - underneath those two crabby undersuits he wore and right where some fool had left them - on his feet.

Funny noises aft disturbed the southward trip from Guzz. Inspection at Gibraltar revealed that 'shook up' cone plates had come adrift and were busily cutting threads on the outer shafts. The job of removing them provided useful experience with the 'Seafire'

Down



under-water cutting torch. Exciting moments were also provided refitting the waist catapult venturi nozzle. A little anxiety arose here when two divers ceased to breathe from the air panel. With the smooth well organised chaos of 'splash the standby diver', Lieut. Millican entered the water with no nose clip and one fin round his left knee, to be informed by a surfacing diver that they were managing nicely on the exhaust from the pneumatic gun!!!

To the depths



With the second Leg came Lieut. Dalrymple-Smith to ramrod the outfit. Arrival at Malta brought a little welding job on the port rudder. Singapore saw the same problem repeated. This time the offending plate was removed for special treatment. Immediately of course came the M.E. crisis and we scrambled it all back in 48 hours. The job has now become practically routine.

There have been lighter moments of course such as when 'Shiner' tried a running take-off from the flight deck but stalled and ended none to gracefully amongst the discharge alongside. 'Ackers' surpassed this next day by using his head as a fender when bringing the launch alongside. Last but not least there has always been 'operation awkward' to provide a little fun.