



It's nice to come home to a more conventional way of life!

LEAVE (Bliss)

One or two presentations ...



(in



Sarbe tankards



Tiverton Adoption Ceremony

*and with a
new Captain
at the controls ...*



*... we were off
again (cheering farewell
to an old Royal Lady
in Spithead)*



... to ...

*it can't be ...
but it is ...
... ADEN
(for the third time
of asking!)*



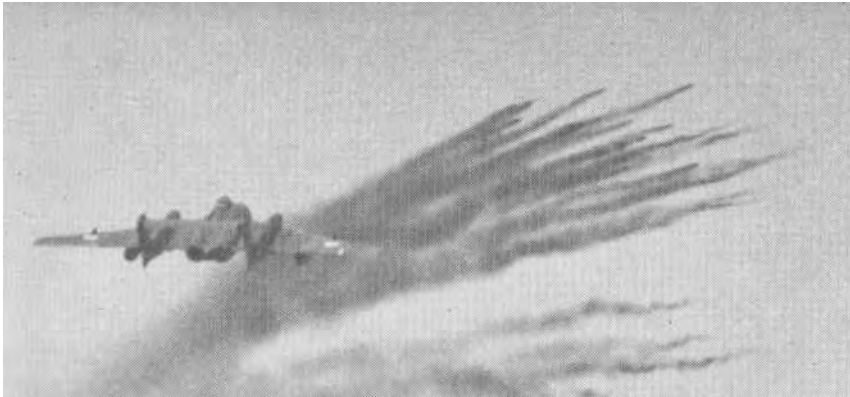
... lets just go through it once again George - when you find this N.L.F chap, you tell him you are the advance party from HERMES and shes on the way with a load of Christmas Pud and good wishes from me - and for Gods sake remember you're not juggling up with the Aden Working Mens Club ...



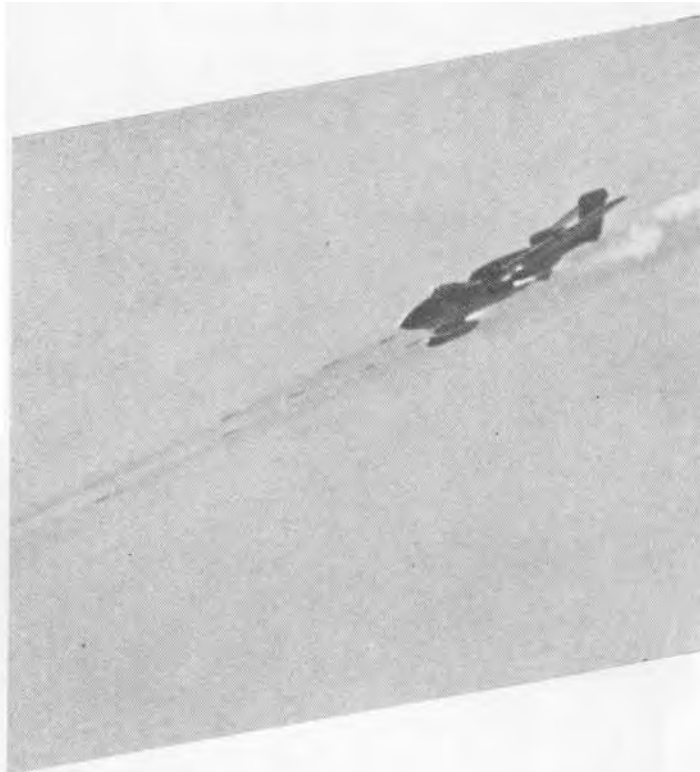
*En route we
entertained the
residents*

... at Ascension





... got in some worthwhile flying practice ...

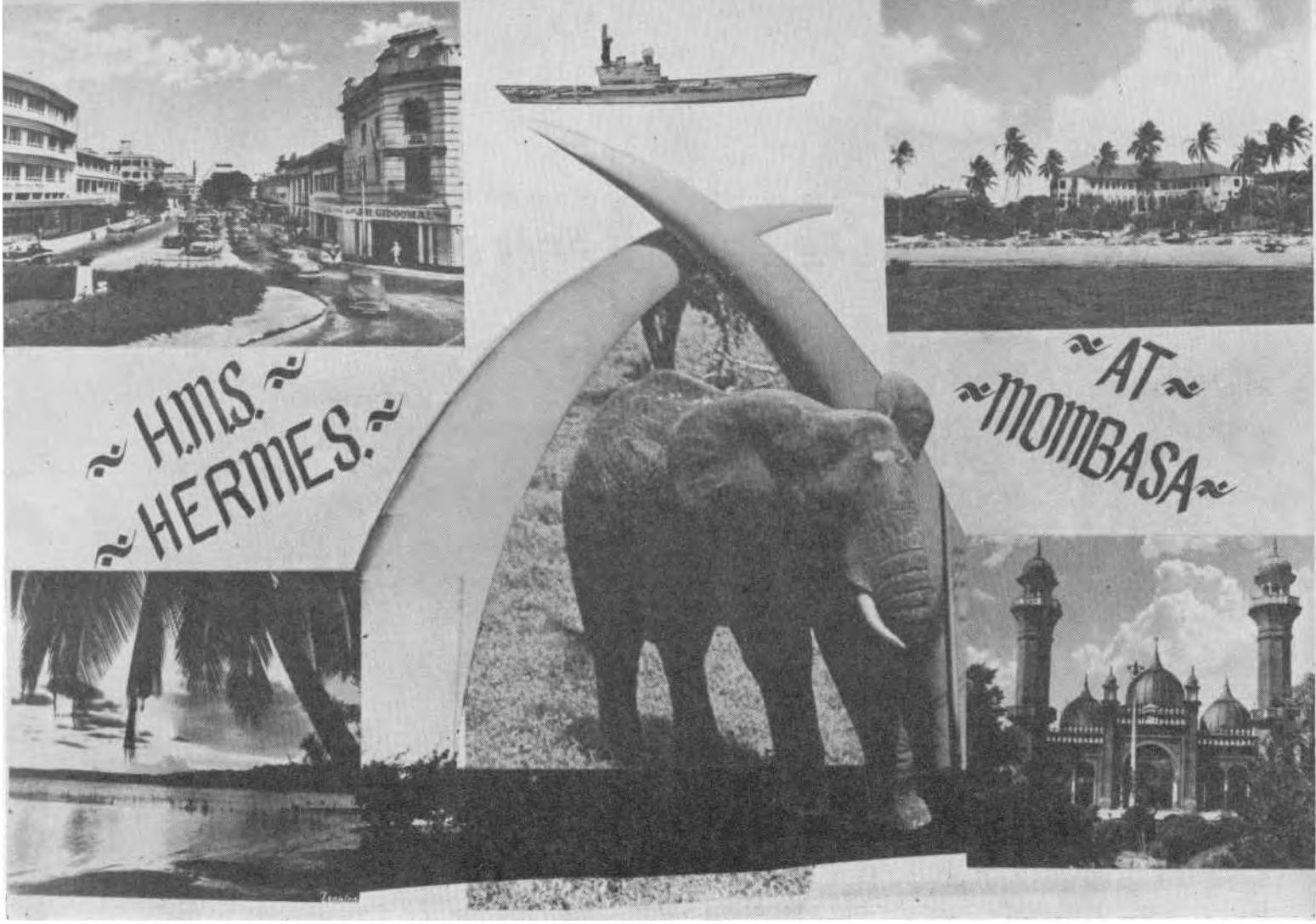


... sent Off our Christmas mail ...

... and called in at ...



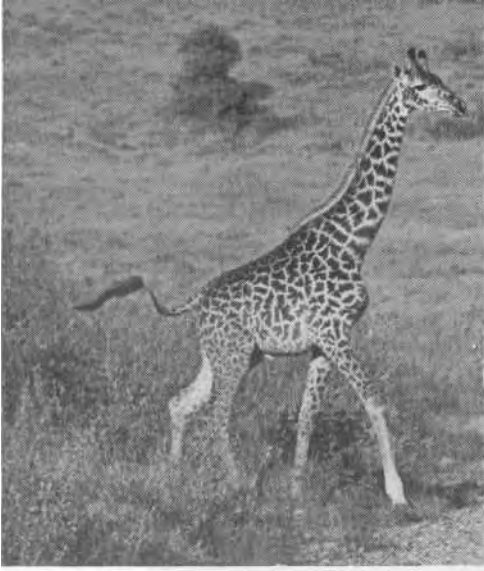
... then in walks this birdman to the Muizenburg G.R.O. where I work an' says "I'm after the Hermes mail darling" - man, I'm telling you, that wasn't the only thing 'e was after. We were in the sorting room for 2 hours. Talk about Air Male Diversion eh?...



1st -11th December
where we were entranced by its life (night) and ...



Night Life in Mombasa.



... its life (wild)

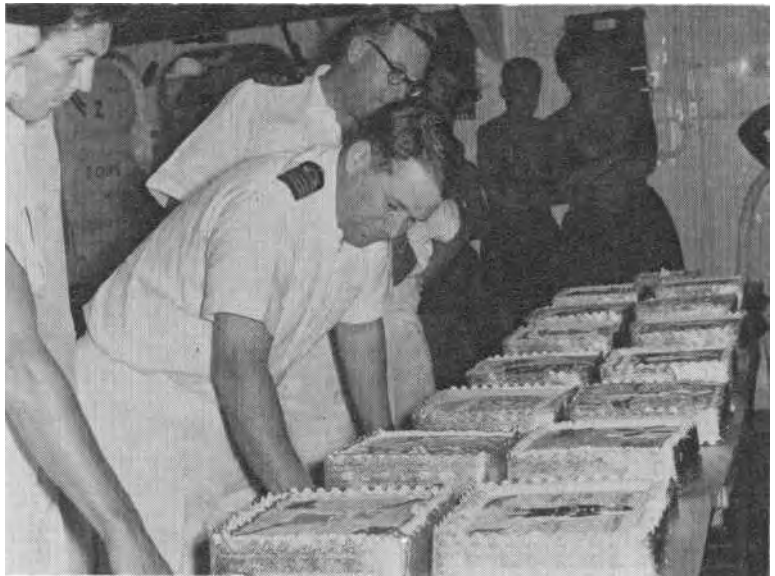


"Good idea of your Scarse comin' on this Safari. Never realised they got things so well organized."



'I've just popped ashore and, look, I've come back with four rings'

Our narrative concludes with a shamal-bound CHRISTMAS 1967 spent at Duhar Dibbah !



'Mmm... Christmas cake'

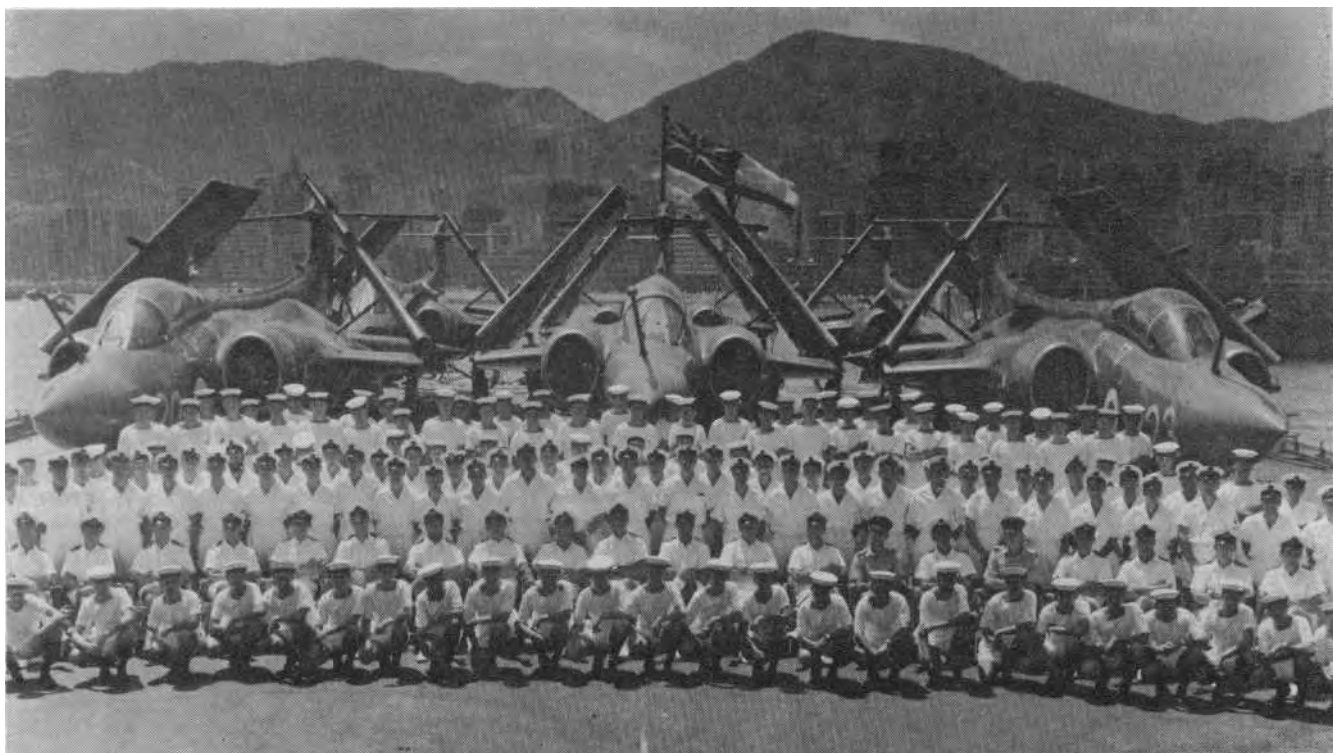


The Derby at Dibbah Park

The Pantomime—'Cinders'



809 Squadron



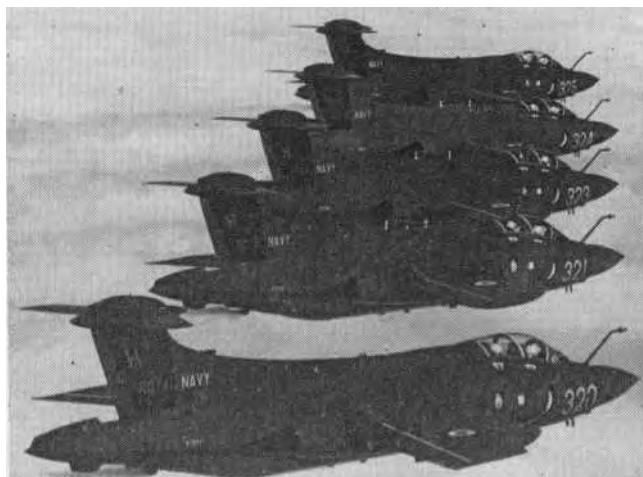
Hong Kong 1966

At Lossiemouth on 27th January 1966, Rear Admiral D. W. Kirke was present to see Lt.-Cdr. Lyn Middleton rekindle the fire and to see the Phoenix make herself comfortable (?) once again in the hot seat. 'Running in' our six new Buccaneers began as soon as the effects of the commissioning party and run ashore wore off. From the outset the ground crews under the effervescent 'Hicky' earned a reputation for producing serviceable aircraft, to the embarrassment, then, of the Hierachy who were still waiting for a number of aircrew to join. Among them we awaited the arrival of the first ever AWI(O). As there were already three AWIs on the squadron the first weaponry briefing promised to be quite an event. We were not disappointed. The quartet made a magnificent debut but obviously needed more practice since more than one note of disharmony was enjoyed by the rest of the squadron. The quartet seldom performed together again but two of them went on to establish a very successful partnership, eventually attracting the attention of that well known impresario, Herbie Lott, as a result of their splashing hit, 'Throw Off Medium Toss for Two Voices' with accompaniment by the Green Tweakers Group.

The work-up proceeded apace with the training directive (just) and we were soon over expending our allotment of weapons and improving as a result. We avoided rotting up the Low Flying areas and kept a prudent distance from the North Sea Oil Rigs. The commissioning of H.M.S. *Hermes* afforded an opportunity of a visit by a small (and nasty?) team, led by the CO, flying down from Lossie for that auspicious occasion. In between all the routine flying we occasionally found ourselves at Yeovilton where, with

892 Squadron, we participated in the Freedom of Gosport Flypast and Sea Days 1966. (Never before have so many aircraft been in such a small area of sky in such low visibility and not hit each other, either with the weapons they discarded or with each other - ANYMOUSE.)

Later in the year the *Hermes* Air Group participated in the Farnborough Air Show. These 'performances' were punctuated by a short embarked period for deck trials and by our Operational Readiness Inspection. The aircraft developed hiccups at the thought of embarking for the



Farnborough 1966

first work-up so most of us missed the Hamburg `run' (most of us did). However, the New Year found us well and truly embarked and enjoying the Mediterranean sunshine both from the flying and the `Bronzy' points of view. At Gibraltar, flying was limited but recreational activities were hotly pursued. The squadron `Round the Rock' relay team finished somewhere in the middle of the field but our hockey team (S OBS) won the Inter-Part Knock-Out competition.

March and April in the Central Med. provided us with our most interesting and enjoyable flying of the commission, including a very good exercise with the U.S.S. *America*, good weaponry at El Adem and excellent `Goofing' low level navexes in Sicily and Italy, particularly during exercise `Dawn Clear' when restrictions were not so rigid. Hal Far was voted an outstanding success by all, the nostalgia of `Stand Easy' at Ronnie's Bar, after Church beer at J.D's or an old fashioned `run' down the `Gut' being too much for at least one member who returned to the U.K. on the excuse of collecting our seventh aircraft. We moved further East to yet warmer climes in both the meteorological and political senses and we vigorously attacked Athens and locality with our Zoom Zoom lenses. Numerous `kills' were claimed on the Acropolis and at Delphi - some people even got as far as Piraeus.

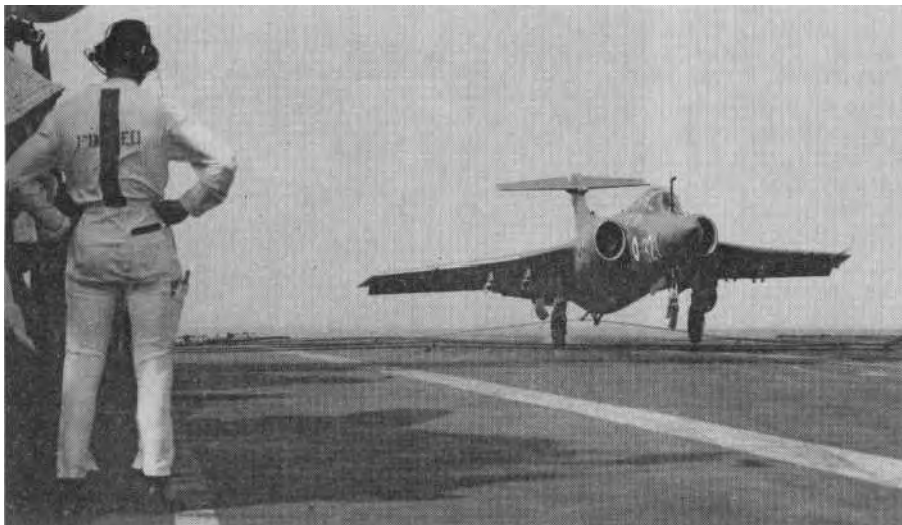
We enjoyed RAF Akrotiri's hospitality during our enforced stay in the area and the `Black' watch took the opportunity to get in more night flying. Through the Canal - just in time - and yet another delay, this time off Aden, because of the complicated and explosive political situations. Our new CO, Lt.-Cdr. A. J. White, tried to join as we yo-yoed between Aden, Gan and Singapore - eventually arriving at Aden. When we eventually disembarked to RAF Changi we split up into some sort of watch routine and took advantage of local leave. Most of the `delights' of the East were sampled - including Jungle Survival training for a majority of the aircrew - the delight came in completing it. Further `delights' were sampled in Subic Bay and Hong Kong where a highly successful squadron `run' was held at the China Fleet Club - at least that is where it all started. On the flying side we hacked exotic sounding places like Song Song Range, China Rock, Scarborough Shoals and Wild Horse Creek. After a quick look down under



'Nana rampant

(Fremantle) and a fast passage back, we disembarked to Lossie for leave and, surprise, surprise, to prepare ourselves to re-embark. This we did after one of the swiftest Octobers on record.

Flying off Ascension Island, of happy (?) memory, fleeting glimpses of Cape Town and Durban quickened our pulses for a run ashore but this was not to be until Mombasa. Once there cameras and Safari boots were dusted - then so many people went `Walk About' that we did not see them again until Procedure Alpha a week later. At the time of going to Press we are seeing the Old Year out and the New Year in off Aden and trying our best to look `Steely' and Operational just like `Ant' in the newest Fleet Air Arm recruiting posters ...



Two wire?