

814 Squadron, 1964.

ceed further with trials at night. These were confined to deck landings only and were carried out by the Senior Pilot, Commander (Air) and a senior squadron pilot. The platform, fitted out with edge lighting, direction T's, horizon reference lights and silhouette lighting proved no problem, so we now look forward to more and more 'forward operating' which not only reduces the time-off-task but also clears the deck for fixed-wing operations.

Then came Hong Kong again, where, as well as the usual relaxations, we spent a most enjoyable time with the Royal Ulster Rifles at

their camp in the New Territories. Due to go into Borneo the following week, they had little experience of helicopter operations and were delighted at the opportunity to work with us. In three full mornings the entire First Battalion was put through the full range of drills, ending with a thirty foot rope descent into the trees.

On the way to Japan the weather precluded flying operations, but on the way back the Squadron again embarked two Wessex, three crews and a maintenance team in TIDE-SPRING for an extended period of trial operating. After this came the

SEATO exercise LIGTAS and return to Singapore and the end of the commission.

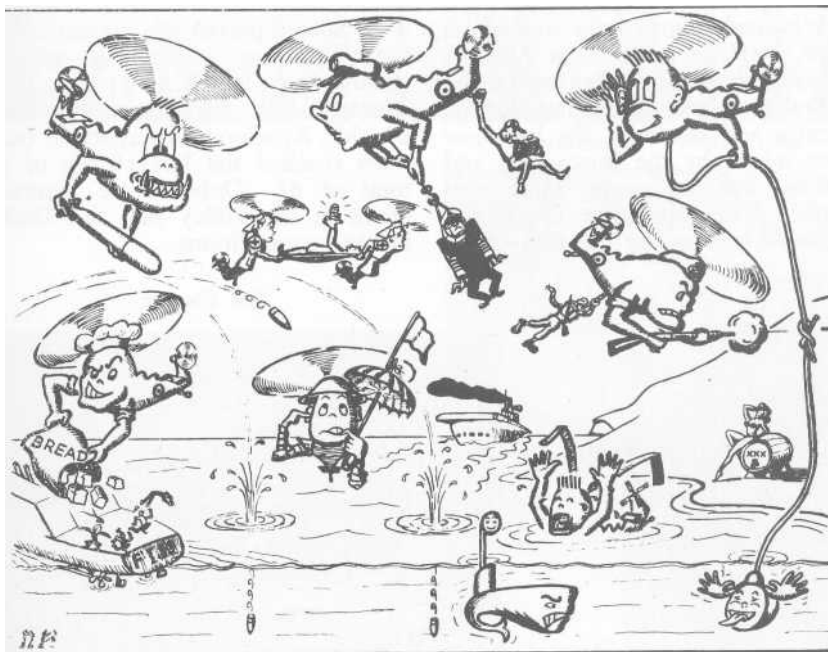
Over the past year a good many ships have been visited by our helo-control gospel spreading team, and a lot has been gained by all. On arrival receptions have been varied and interesting, including ice cold Fosters, Chilli omelette, a gallon of Goffer, ice cold reception and S.F.A. but the best remark of all came when one squadron observer, who hails from north of the border, visited a Canadian frigate of the same name. "Your crest should have a stag's head" he said. "Oh godamm" replied the Canadian. "The nearest we could get was a Moose, and we figured that would do."

Although VICTORIOUS is recommissioning, 814 remains substantially the same. The trickle system of relief continues as usual, so that when the squadrons re-embark in August there will still be many familiar faces left in the Squadron. It has been an interesting and enjoyable year, with a lot of varied work and a lot of fun, and we hope that those about to start are as lucky as we were.

Summary of flying during the year in H.M.S. VICTORIOUS.

- Day sorties 1829.
- Night sorties 189.
- Total Day Hours flown 1830.
- Total Night Hours flown 294.

A few of the activities indulged in by 814 Squadron.



849 A Flight

MANY PEOPLE MAY WONDER What exactly is the role of the Gannet 3. Looking back over this commission we are beginning to wonder ourselves.

It all started off Aden in September when we were asked to do a photo drop. Of course we said we could do it and a wonderful contraption was fitted with a parachute and clipped into the stores bay. The Army, who were on the receiving end, had marked out a large dropping zone and had retired an equally large distance away. Our Senior Pilot managed to drop the pack within 20 feet of the centre of the target, and it was quickly picked up by a passing Arab on his camel; fortunately he was neatly intercepted by a Land Rover and the photographs retrieved.

Our second interesting role was off Hong Kong. We searched for a tug which had escaped from the harbour after being arrested. Although it had over 12 hours start, it was found after 12 hours and shadowed until night-fall when H.M.A.S. QUIBERON took over. Unfortunately QUIBERON was not allowed to board her, and the tug continued on her way with a very frightened crew.

We did, however, manage to do some A.E.W. and during the second work-up the observers came into their element. The Sky Hawks from Cubi were our main opponents, with E.C.M. Skyraiders trying to jam our radar. It proved to be a very interesting work-up from our point of view, with some very good results.

Whilst disembarked at R.A.F. SELETAR for Christmas, we worked with the Buccaneers in the Straits of Malacca, and as 893 seemed reluctant to interrupt their water skiing, the Javelins of 60 Squadron were used as interceptors. The R.A.F. pilots had no trouble at all under-



Two Gannets and some friendly Skyraiders:

standing our patter, and they even asked if they could work with us again. Meanwhile the Flight enjoyed what appeared to be one continuous round of Christmas celebrations.

Without doubt, our most popular role onboard is the mail run, and on the way to Gan all four aircraft were launched. Suddenly the Engineers find that they can stop the funnel smoke, the deck is always ready, and people clamour to help the crews down from the aircraft. In fact everything stops for the mail. One night during our work-up off the Philippines, one pilot made an unscheduled run, calling at 3 different airfields before finding the mail. He then put one observer ashore for the night in order to get it all in. On returning, he was given a mild rocket which was toned down when the pipe 'Mail is ready for collection' was made.

'Gan Air' was founded on the 1st February, 1964, when two aircraft were flown ashore to R.A.F. EAST-LEIGH at Nairobi. Every morning the aircraft flew to Mombasa, Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi with stores, mail and passengers. After two weeks of this, we dispensed with observers, and followed the trail of oil drips over the bush. Gan Air was officially recognised when we moved to Embakasi and parked amongst the Comets and Boeings. We had now been joined by the Buccaneers and Vixens, but our stores runs continued. The local time check was signalled at 0900 by the take off of

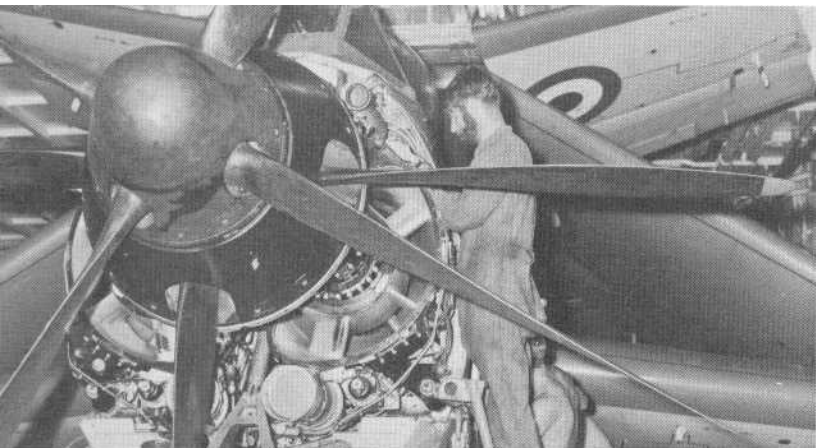
one Gannet. Meanwhile the parties continued.

Exercise JET gave us a record of 262 hours flown in one month. Our main task was a ship search for I.N.S. MYSORE during which we flew 24 hours a day for nearly three days. We finally found her just as she was about to fire her missiles, and as no Vixens were available we attacked with a deadly Mk. 10 flare. MYSORE claimed the convoy destroyed, and we claimed MYSORE. The exercise finished with a day of A.E.W. against attacks from R.A.A.F. BUTTERWORTH. The attacks came so fast and furious that the Senior Observer swamped the 'D's who kept asking for a Sitrep. During this same exercise, the flight claimed two submarines and two Shackletons for the loss of one Gannet.

Since leaving Culdrose last August the flight has flown more than 1,500 hours with over 600 deck landings.

On the sporting side, whilst disembarked at Seletar, every opportunity was made of the numerous facilities. The aircrew played an Indian Officers XI at hockey and emerged the victors with an amazing score of 4-1. Soccer played the biggest role, the Squadron playing 4 games against Army and R.A.F. teams, and winning all 4. In an Inter Services 6-a-side Knock-out Tournament our team reached the last 16 out of a total of 64. Onboard we entered teams in the Volley Ball and Deck Hockey competitions.

Under the bonnet.

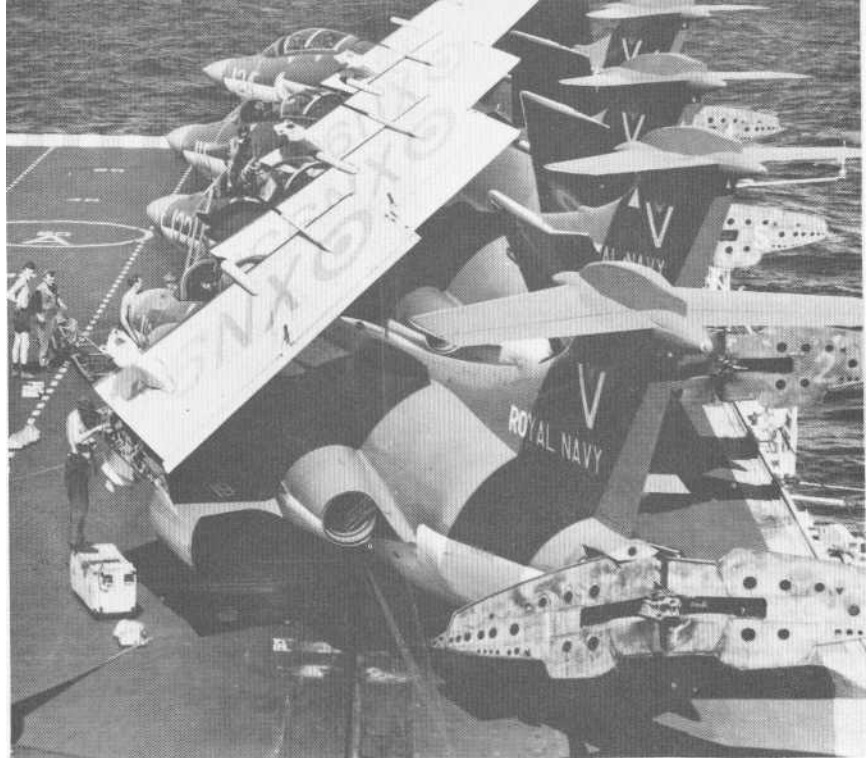


The Courier.

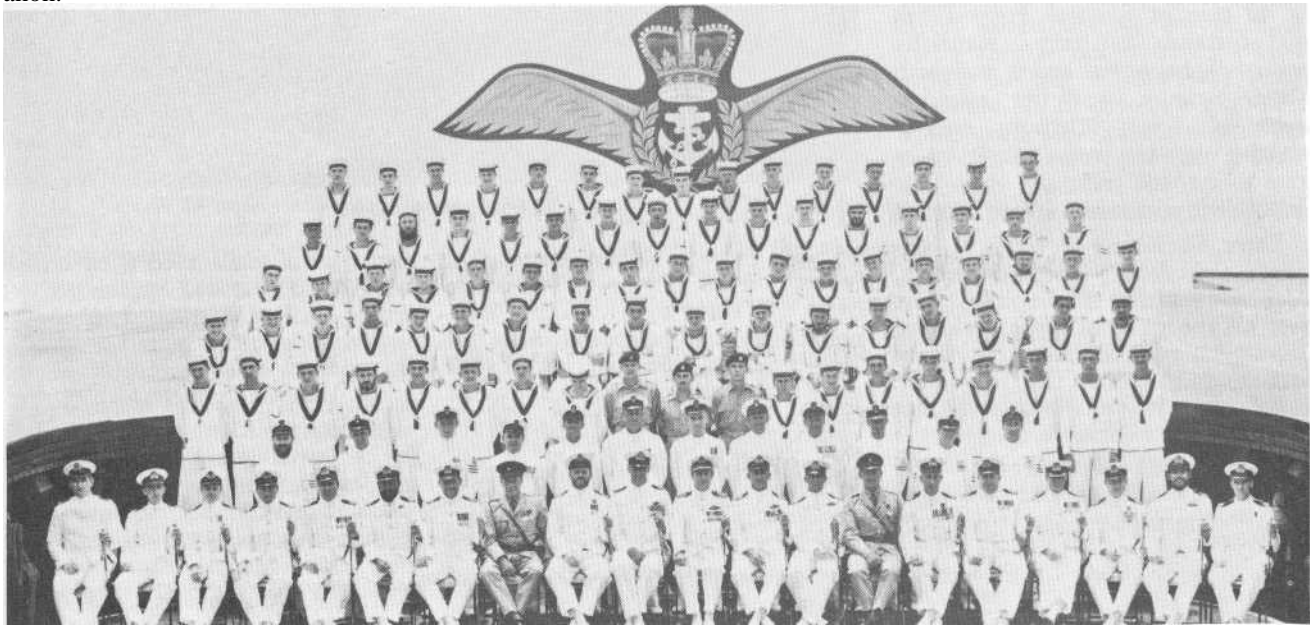


Air Department

THIS IS THE DEPARTMENT which spends most of its time `on the roof' - or at least the larger part of it does, not forgetting the handling teams below in the hanger where space is at a premium. But there are also the 'Men Behind the Scenes'; the Operations team, planning the programme, briefing the aircrew and then changing it all; the Photographic Section, plenty of their handywork in this Book; the Safety Equipment Section; the ATCOs, alias TOKYO TOURS inc. and the Voices, lower and upper, of ACRO, who uses aircraft for a private jig-saw game, and Lt. Cdr. (F) who lives in a room with a view. You may also observe a tastefully arranged scattering of Military Men in the picture below - more of this anon.



Fly One — Ship-shape and Bristol Fashion.



Air Department - March 1964.

*Sort that lot out!
A busy Fly One after
a land on.*



Flight Deck

OUR FIRST F.D.O. having retired hurt, the second saw us through flying trials while teaching the third all he knew before the ship sailed for the mysterious Orient.

Our work-ups were scattered by winds of programmatic change, but even before Aden the Flight Deckers had Hemingway style fishermen's tans. The Aden work up was very, very hot; for the second off Subic Bay we enjoyed idyllic weather (followed by some prolonged Olongapo hangovers), while the injury-free night Vixen ramp strike, was got through in fine style with Christmas as the carrot at the end of the stick.

The chances of having a fire under the CALE Gear, forward lift failure and a prang on deck at once must be as rare as Siamese Polar Bears and certainly as hairy. Naturally enough it happened and it was with some pleasure that the sweating mass of Flight Deckers merrily clearing up the mess observed a goofer on the sidelines have his boots melt under him. Yuk! Yuk!

Later we netted a Vixen on the pilots' night famil - a good landing, wire and barrier sharing the effort and all the gear working perfectly. The pilot said "it was like flying into a brick wall". Anyway, the F.D.O. had a few words with him and they parted friends.

Shortly after the "troubles" in Darkest Africa began, our deck filled



Vixens on parade - as dressed by Captain of the Flight Deck.



"For exercise . . . another second and another crate of beer!"

up with Ferrets, Rovers, stores and barbed wire belonging to our guests of 45 Cdo. and 16/5 Lancers. During those few sun-baked days off Dar-es-Salaam, the air crackled with small arms practice and it was as well to wave the cap on a stick before hoisting the major portion of ones target area above deck edge level. A matinee performance con-

sisting of a small fixed wing launch was put on, watched by hundreds of khaki goofers festooned over the upper works like ants and practically applauding each movement of the corps de ballet below.

We have also waived landing fees for a few Beavers, Skyraiders and single Pioneers, not to mention the 73' wingspan Trader who must have felt he was going through the gate in a giant Slalom.

The F.D.O. and the Air Department Officers will be happy to see the end of the commission thus ending the drain on their pockets. In an effort to improve speed and efficiency, a crate of beer was offered for beating the Work Study target time for rigging the crash barrier. It has been beaten so many times, that the Air Department Officers have resorted to nobbling fork-lift trucks and their drivers, always unsuccessfully. They should have known that one of the pleasures of life dearest to a Handler's heart (almost), is his ale.



The real thing - and justification for all those practices.

A
69

Soixante-Neuf

CARRIER BORNE GROUND LIAISON SECTION

(INNOCENTS ABROAD)

IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING of a surprise for those who had not served in a carrier before to see a small party of 'Pongoes' embarking at Portsmouth, complete with green Landrover. We will try and explain our presence in a few short sentences, which will throw light on the reason we are onboard at all, and at the same time destroy a popular Naval misconception that all soldiers look like something Kitchener pointed out as being somebody whose "country needs him".

Today's soldiers are members of a highly complex and skilled team of specialists - we know; it says so in the book. The book goes on to explain what a C.B.G.L. Section is, how they are a band of selected volunteers who have answered the call put out by the War Office - sorry Ministry of Defence (ARMY), and what a C.B.G.L. Section does. This is really where the 'innocents abroad' part comes in. A verbatim extract from the official blurb is worth producing at this juncture.

Quote "Para 7 - CARRIER PROGRAMME - the following points may be of interest to prospective volunteers:-

- (a) Once a C.B.G.L. Section has been formed it normally stays with the carrier to which it has been appointed for a tour of between eighteen months and two years i.e. the whole commission of the ship.
- (b) During this time the ship will normally spend the first three months "working up" in the Mediterranean followed by a month or so in Great Britain. She is then likely to sail East of Suez and remain there for six to eight months, after which she will normally return to the Mediterranean and home waters paying visits to various European, American and Scandinavian Ports before "paying off" Unquote.

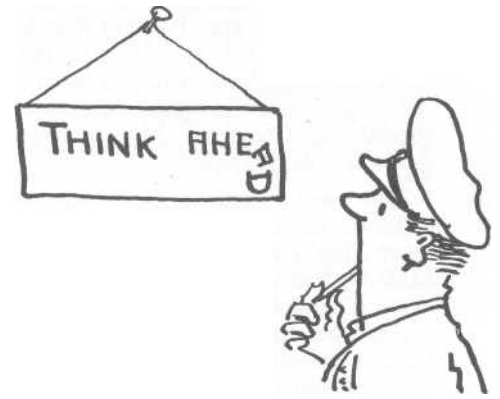
- Well as we said "innocents abroad".



Popular Naval Misconception

Now to actual fact - at the time of writing we are in our tenth month in the Far East having briefly glimpsed Portsmouth as we threw our kit hastily aboard. We also had to find our own way round this "highly complex team of specialists" however we succeeded very happily with "webfoot" help.

The C.B.G.L.O. himself is responsible to Commander Air for the training of Squadrons in all matters of relevant Army Organisation and tactics, also, in conjunction with the A.W.Ls, training aircrews in close air support of ground troops, instructing squadrons in recognition of military equipment, in the happy art of escape and evasion, the only subject in which Naval Personnel acknowledge our undoubted superior 'knowhow'. The Section briefs and debriefs aircrews assigned to reconnaissance and army support sorties AND supplies large scale topogra-



phical maps of certain areas of the world from Wapping to Wallamalloo (Australia 1:25,000); the book says "at a moments notice", the Section has been known to take a little longer. In fact this job takes up the largest percentage of our time, a brief glance at our statistics a little further on will explain why. Replacement of this coverage and keeping up with the squadrons who eat maps for Breakfast requires a little "Thinking ahead". These then are some but by no means all of the jobs done by a C.B.G.L. Section.

Some of the more memorable events which have involved the Section should be recorded. The first incident occurred during the Ship's trials when the Section disembarked to DARTMOOR to carry out some Forward Air Control work with 893 Squadron. All was quiet until an alteration of 'run in bearing from the CONTACT POINT' produced the following letter to their Lordships from a lady of undoubted good works and loyalties.

"I was driving along the ASH-BURTON - PRINCETOWN road when a Jet Fighter (Ed's. note - curiously accurate knowledge for an elderly lady) swooped out of the clouds at just over car roof level. Whilst this is doubtless good fun for the pilot and good strategy in time of war, I suggest that it is sufficiently frightening to the normal driver to be unpleasant, to the nervous driver to cause a dangerous swerve and to the weak hearted, elderly, or very young to cause real suffering. I was fortunate to have a troop of Scouts

on board who warned me of the aircrafts approach etc..." How fortunate can you be? Firstly that the cloud on Dartmoor was just above car roof level, secondly to have aboard an organised body whose motto is "Be Prepared".

The next incident occurred in ADEN; Captain Downe was air controlling up in the desert near LODAR and was invited by the local Federal Regular Army Commander to see the Sheik's Palace. He remained unperturbed despite the fact that the wall of the principal room was decorated with lavatory seats, "like horses' halters in a stable". They had apparently been purloined from a disused Army Fort nearby.

So it goes on both day and night; the one thing you can be absolutely sure of is the fact that you can't be absolutely sure of what is going to happen next (writer's note - I have looked at that sentence several times and although I am not sure I understand it, I think it sums things up very well).

A few statistics - statistics of course can be made to prove anything; all we want to prove really is that we have earned our space in this book. We have drawn up, checked and stowed 250,893 maps. Driver O'Brien has driven the Section Landrover 10,801 miles. Dare we say without an accident, the commission still has a few weeks to run.

Pte Breen has brewed 3,814 cups of coffee for the tired and 'hung over'. Captain Downe has drawn 369 cartoons for our Line Book, 'Vic' News and R.P.C. Notices, and Major Rattray has consumed 849 pink gins.

Finally what of the people who make up the Section? 'Soixante Neuf' itself will remain with the Ship made up of a new brand; Cavalry and Highland Infantry this time. Major Rattray and Captain Downe are going to HMS ARK. ROYAL/EAGLE, to start again. Sergeant Allen and Pte Breen are returning to Regimental Duty and Dvr O'Brien is soon to start Parachute training, jumping in with both feet and his eyes open once again.

'Sailor vie' as the French say 'est fin'.



C. C. A.

The 5 ATCOs of the CCA team joined the Ship in May 1963 to become an integral part of the Air Department. We were very quickly sent off to Dryad (that school for seamen) to train us to become an integral part of the Executive Department. The two "caps" we have been wearing since have resulted in an unusual time in the ship for everyone.

All in all a wide selection of activities have kept us busy. We have carried out the duties of CCA and Homer, Special Sea Dutymen and watchkeeping on the Bridge, Air Administration, AIR Training, Confidential Books and Expedition Training. Organised Golf, played sports, and produced the finest "collection" of deck hockey players to be seen on the Flight Deck. Nevertheless we have still had enough time left to enjoy all the Air Stations we have been dis-embarked to with the squadrons.

The reader will not believe that there hasn't been a lighter side to the commission and the writer would not want him to have this impression. We have all either collectively or individually enjoyed all our "runs" and only wish we could have all been together at the finish.

Photographic Section

AS SOME OF THE 'SNAPPERS' prepare to return to our naturally air conditioned darkrooms in the U.K., we pause to reflect on the past twelve months.

We have had a wide variety of tasks to perform, but on closer examination of the 'Work book', it appears to have been a 'cake and A 21 party'. With monotonous regularity, the pages reveal - "A 21. Buccaneer," and 100th. (or 1000th.) cake for ; you name it, they've had one for it! For the statistically minded, we have produced 48,651 prints of various shapes and sizes and completed 1208 jobs.

To all the losers of I.D. cards we wish many happy stoppages, and pledge all our support in assisting one of you to get a cake for the 100th. I.D. card photograph lost.

May all your exposures be decent ones!



The Strike Planners

The Action Information Organisation

ALTHOUGH THIS DEPARTMENT of the Ship is undoubtedly the brains behind the scenes, it prefers to remain in the most part silent - in the best traditions of the Service. It is very difficult, of course, to keep fourteen officers and one hundred and twelve ratings silent, especially some of the more fluent members, so a short note of the activities of some is included below.

Before the Ship commissioned, Chief Petty Officer Cook, the PRI, who has been on board for more years than he cares to remember, was awarded the BEM in the Queen's Birthday honours, and was presented with the Medal by C-in-C Portsmouth, in H.M.S. VICTORY: subsequent celebrations took place in the KEPPEL'S HEAD. At about this time, the ship's complement of RPs was being introduced to the 984/CDS system's mysteries at DRYAD, closely followed by innumerable synthetic and live exercises on board and during sea trials. We came to know these synthetics intimately in the following months, thanks to a lack of real live aircraft to control. After sailing from Portsmouth, we took part in three work-ups, at Aden, Singapore and Subic, after which the ship was informed by Their Lordships she would be paying-off in August in Singapore. A fine Christmas present.

Life on board in the ADR has not been too hectic, although we have played our part in several exercises, and have controlled many types of aircraft, including Phantom IIs which the Navy hopes to have when the Americans have finished with them. The Ops Room crew have also done their bit in presenting the command with a clear and up-to-date picture of the situation - by no means an easy task in some circumstances.

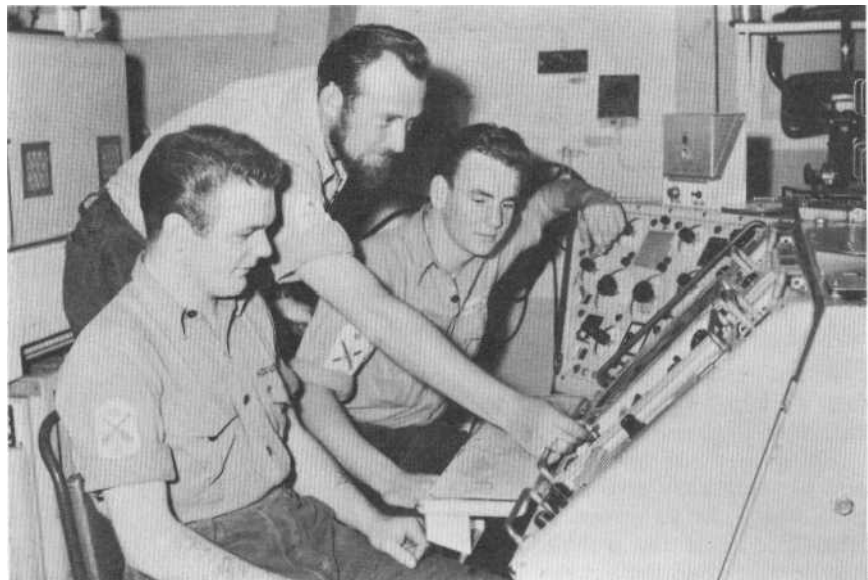
On the lighter side, there have been many interesting episodes recorded, and many more that are not recorded. The RPs ran a very successful dance at the Armada Club Annexe in TERROR at Christmas; there was nearly an ugly scene when most of the prizes were won by the Ds. There was also a memorable banyan in an MFV, when a boat-load

of somewhat gay individuals came across the Commander enjoying a little relaxation on a beach. The Christmas Pantomime 'Alan Laddin' was staged by the Ds and RPs (with some assistance from the Supply Branch), and was an unqualified success, naturally!

It is inevitable that among so many individuals, some should stand out more than others. Taken literally, this immediately reminds one of the Leading Seaman RP2, Motor Boat cox'n, who has no need of fenders as he carries his own round his middle. His crew always seem able to have some over the side, however. Then there is the other Leading Seaman who was reputed to have locked the USN patrol in their waggon in Yokosuka and driven them back to the ship. This was unconfirmed, but as this particular individual had interviewed the Commander a number of times prior to that on other matters, it seems feasible. Many found the delights of Hong Kong, Mombasa and Japan too much for them, and decided to prolong their stay there. Including the Boat Officer who seemed to enjoy Dar-es-Salaam so much that he even attached his boat to part of it. Some did not like the cooking ashore, and came back for dinner and tot daily. One thing one could always be sure of when visiting what one took to be the

lowest, darkest and most evil night spot, RPs could be found under almost every table, admirably led by a couple of the Petty Officers. Life ashore has by no means been dull.

In accordance with latest Admiralty policy, some Gunnery rates have volunteered to change to RP, and a few have been accepted. There is no record of any changes the other way. We hear that the next commission will have even fewer RPs, so it looks as if the Ds will have to make their own coffee and, perhaps, even pay for it!





E.R.A.s and Mechanics.

Engineering and Shipwright Department

FOR MANY OF THE DEPARTMENT the official start of the commission was only another day, as, for many months previously, they had been very busily engaged in getting the 'works' ready for sea.

However, if any of us thought we'd had problems before, the sea trials period rapidly caused us to revise our opinions, since, with the inevitable 'horrors' which rapidly came to light, life was hectic in the extreme. However, the trials were completed and we returned to Portsmouth for a few days to rectify defects - at least some of them - then off to sea again for flying trials. These once again produced their crop of 'crumbles', and it was with some dismay that, on the last day of the trials period, we heard that our time in Portsmouth prior to sailing for the Far East had been reduced by a week. By dint of very considerable efforts by both Dockyard and ship's staff many of the more important defects were rectified in the four days available, and we sailed on time - albeit with fingers crossed.

A fast passage to Aden and the first workup proved what had been suspected - it was hot down below!

Things however worked fairly well and we eventually arrived in Singapore where thanks to our Dockyard friends some of the troubles which had developed during our rapid pass-

age to the East were put right. Another notable occurrence during our first visit to Singapore was the decision of one of our older members that a monsoon ditch made a comfortable resting place. In the meantime, something peculiar had been going on inside a main feed pump which Singapore Dockyard tried to remedy. Unfortunately, the strike of Dockyard workers interfered with the work and, in spite of continuous efforts by the Dockyard Europeans and ship's staff, it gradually became apparent that the pump was beyond repair. We therefore sailed for our second workup relying upon the auxiliary feed pump in the centre unit, but after a couple of days Fate dealt another back-hander and this pump

too 'folded up' in a fairly spectacular way.

It was therefore decided to go to Hong Kong and get ourselves fixed up by Taikoo Dockyard, an event which was reported in the National press. The new Senior Engineer, Lieutenant Commander Wake, had joined in the middle of the feed pump party, and the old Senior Engineer (he really had aged a bit by this time) was flown back to U.K. as a priority passenger to help organise the supply of a new pump and so on by air freight. It is unknown what precise methods he employed but all the necessary bits arrived very smartly indeed, and Taikoo Dockyard did a first class job in getting us right again.

Officers, Ch.M.(E.)s and P.O.M.(E.)s.



Fortunately, the visit was not all work, and Hong Kong revealed its many and diverse attractions.

After this interlude, life became very real and earnest during the second and third work-ups and subsequent exercises - which from the point of view of those below mean frequent high speed dashes in unspecified directions. A couple of days at Subic provided what might pass for relaxation.

Three weeks at Singapore for maintenance and for the Christmas period proved almost too long for some of us. Considerable speculation was caused when Commander (E) was carried aboard one morning, and there are still some who are slightly sceptical that he ruined his ankle doing an eightsome reel.

The engines seemed to enjoy proceeding 'with all despatch' to East Africa, but the unfortunate tiller-flat watchkeepers had a singularly rough ride and could be observed still vibrating some time after coming off watch. Off Dar-es-Salaam, a departmental initiative test and banyan on the near-by 'desert island' produced some ingenious contraptions and some vivid sunburn. Having tasted the distilled water produced by one of the tests, Senior remarked that it was a pity that a rubber hose formed part of the assembly.

We think it was something of a triumph to reach Japan - HERMES, for example, got to within sight but had to return to Singapore. Japan provided all that, and more than, any of us had any reason to expect, and there is little doubt that our visit impressed our very kind hosts. Our photographs were taken on the morning after!

After this we headed South again and took part in the SEATO exercise, LIGTAS, and on its conclusion once more returned to Singapore for the docking period.

We heard with great delight, on the day of our return, that it was announced that C.E.R.A. Fennell and Chief M(E) Earl had been awarded the B.E.M. in the Birthday Honours list. Our heartiest congratulations to them both on their well-deserved decorations.

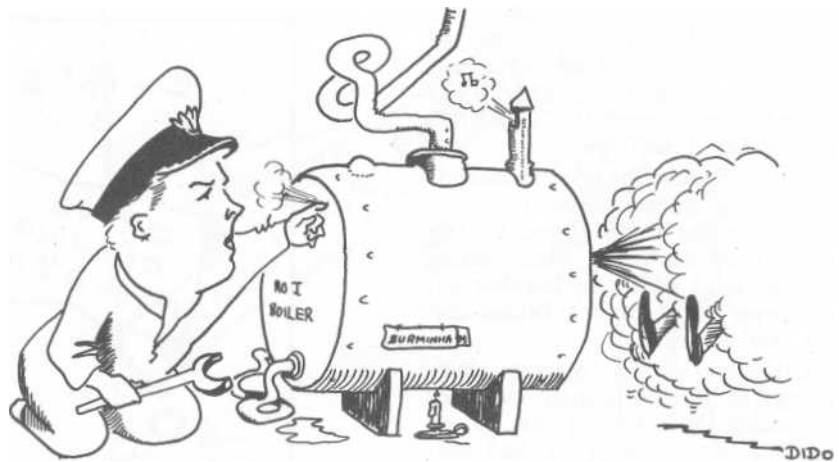
It is on this pleasant note that we virtually end this part of the commission.



Port Watch of M.(E.)s.

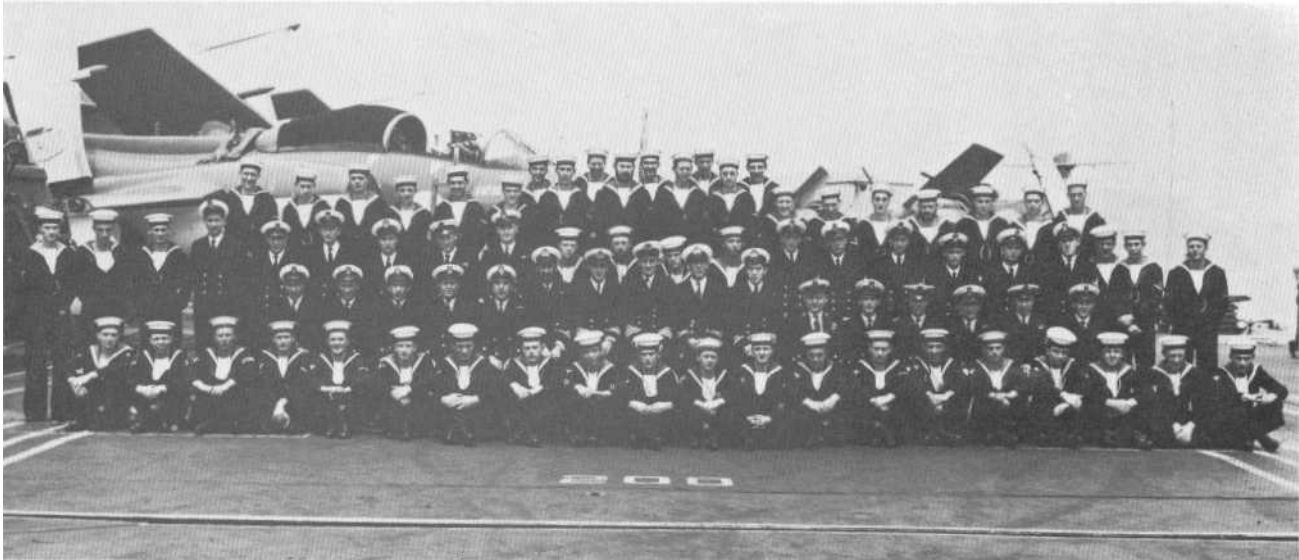


Starboard Watch of M.(E.)s.



That seems to have fixed this side!

Flight Deck Engineering



"Badger - Noted for the fierce defence of its burrow against dogs" - Oxford English Dictionary.

WE STARTED IN THE SUMMER Of 1962, when two enormous holes appeared in the Flight Deck above the catapults, and our new wet steam accumulators were lowered in. Similarly on the port side more holes appeared for the LOX plants, and the freezing winter was spent in setting everything to work.

Gradually (whilst sensible badgers were hibernating), things progressed, and with the Spring results began to appear. H.P. Air, our life-blood, hissed into existence again. The lifts creaked slowly up to the top after 14 months at hangar deck level. The arresting gear units were finally assembled for test, and the avfuel and hydraulic systems made ready. LOX was produced aboard VICTORIOUS for the first time.

May 1963 saw the start of catapult trials. We hurled more than 400 deadloads into the sea, and by July were ready for flying trials, during the course of which the heaviest aircraft ever to fly from a British carrier was launched.

Undoubtedly the biggest single change in the department occurred overnight. We crawled out of the howdah one morning to find our-

selves dubbed 'Badgers', and it certainly looks as though the term will spread to all the Flight Decks in the fleet.

Like any badgers, we are hard to find when wanted, and more often than not we'll be found on the sports field. Although enthusiastic in every branch of sport, our efforts have not been crowned with ultimate success, with the notable exception of the volley ball competition, in which we swept the board.

As the twilight closes on the commission, (we brought in our dock-

yard friends to do the last launch!) one can look back on the inevitable statistics. We have launched more than the weight of the ship in aircraft; our lifts have carried the weight of 175 Eiffel Towers to 17 times the height of Everest etc., etc. Life on the Flight Deck of an operational carrier is never dull, and this commission has certainly been no exception. Nevertheless it will be a pleasant contrast to be flown home in a silent aircraft, even if it isn't launched by Flight Deck Engineers.

0000 Down Howdah 0000

