

Shipwrights

THE COMMISSION has produced some interesting statistics, and these illustrate the diversity of jobs undertaken by the department.

New locker keys cut; 482, at the cost to the ship's company Of £40.

Ventilation filters renewed; 1925.

Paint issued totalled 8,600 gallons: sufficient to cover every football pitch in the English League. Oxygen and acetylene bottles used for welding; 402. Plywood used; 9,500 sq.ft.

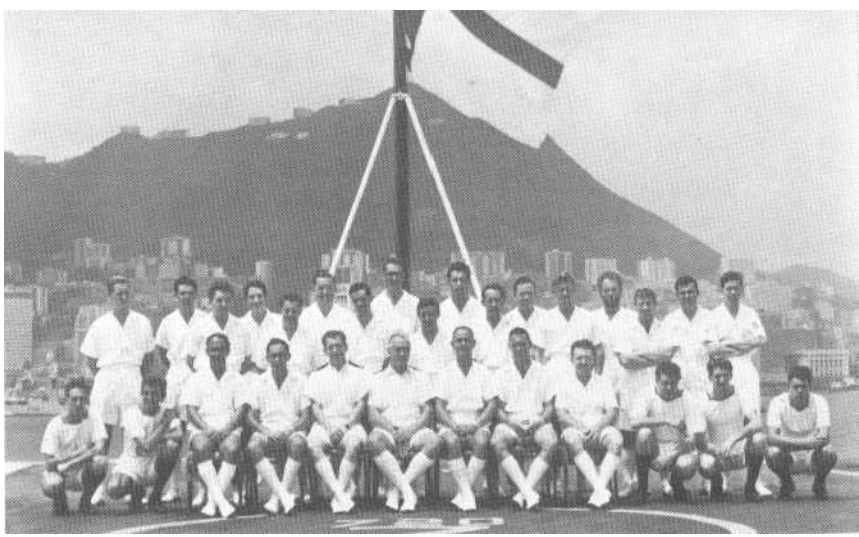
Length, in ft, of electric welding rod used; 6,700. Deck scuppers, sinks, etc. unblocked; 816. Items removed included a length of chain, underpants, electric light bulbs, a tin of tooth powder and a tin of peeled prawns!

As the commission progressed, the cakes presented to various departments grew in number and size. To ensure we would not feel left out, it was decided that a cake should be presented to the shipwrights, by the shipwrights.

The presentation was made at the Shipwright Staff Annual Dinner and Darts, held at the China Fleet Club. Some excellent photographs are now in existence of the Shipwright Officer trying in vain to make the first cut. Eventually the cleverly disguised half inch plywood outer casing was removed to expose the real cake beneath. This was definitely the best kept secret of the commission.

Apart from the service supplied to the ship, and a total of 2,850 jobs

How did you guess I was the Chippie?



completed, the shipwrights insist on claiming the distinguished title of 'the best buzz spreaders in the ship'.

The regulating chief shipwright, a past master at the game, took full advantage of the undecided future programme to spread a number of highly probable and successful buzzes. (The secret is to tell them what they want to hear.) Early in the commission, a qualification for acceptance of a job card at the shipwright's office was to be in possession of the latest buzz. Some of the most successful buzzes concerning the ship's future were started in the office at turn-to and repeated as hot gen by stand easy. It must be admitted that at one stage possession of the rudder drawings was a distinct advantage.

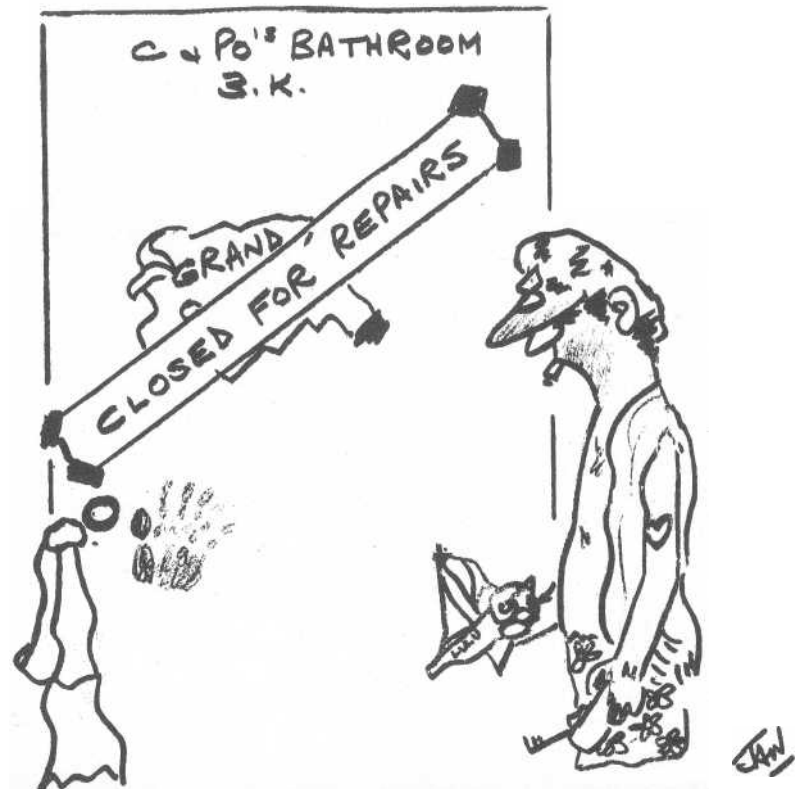
Halfway through the commission M.E.I. Jones left for U.K. after serving the dept. faithfully for three years. The gratitude and respect of

the staff was demonstrated by the presentation of an expensive and suitably engraved wristwatch.

During the commission, Shipwrights Goodman and Crimp deservedly passed the chiefs examination and Plumber Prestan after a very long wait on the roster was made Chief.

The arrival of four apprentices for sea training caused some commotion and turned some of the older shipwrights into acting, unpaid instructors. Investigations are still going on to discover how four apprentices can arrive at Hong Kong on a Saturday afternoon without tropical kit or tool boxes and with a total of ten cents (Malayan) between them.

As the members of the shipwright department move on to other ships and establishments, it is hoped they take with them some pleasant memories of their commission and H.M.S. VICTORIOUS.



Weapons Radio and Electrical Department

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT change since last commission has been the disappearance of the old Electrical and Ordnance Departments and the formation of a Weapons, Radio and Electrical Department, some 200 strong.

The first few weeks of the commission were a constant battle for survival. Having for months attempted to contain the "enemy" in the shape of hordes of invaders in brown overalls, all seemingly bent on destruction, we were left holding the baby and nearly met our Dien-Bien-Phu. Six thousand recorded defects were dealt with in the first three months against a background of all Departments in the ship screaming for everything to be put right at once, or else! And the loss of that week alongside was a body blow.

Things had perked up by Christmas, however, after a welcome stay in Hong Kong, and the period before is now only a bad memory which those who were there are unlikely to forget. The Department has a finger in every pie, as can be seen in the comments from the various Groups.

On the sporting side, we have had representatives from the Department in most of the Ship's teams. Departmental teams have been ashore at most ports we have visited and the high spot was undoubtedly when the Electrical (Port) team beat the Air Engineering Department to win the final of the Soccer knock-out competition on the first day of 1964.

"Happy Hour" has seen us taking part in most flight deck activities from sunbathing to deck hockey. Unfortunately we have not been able to partake in that fascinating sport of tugmaster racing. Recently we have seen the formation of the Electrical Officers' Volley Ball team who, although expending a considerable amount of energy, have yet to win a match.

Weapons and Flight Deck Group

This Commission we have welcomed into our midst a total of 19 seamen who, together with the O.A.'s and some electrical ratings, work under the Chief O.A. to form the Armament Section and are employed full time on weapons' maintenance.

On the Flight Deck, as is to be expected, life has been pretty hectic, since without our assistance the ship would be unable to launch or recover the aircraft. Many an hour has been spent amongst a tangle of steam and oil pipes trying to get at those capricious pick-ups for the catapult end-speed recorders. In the early days, it was a not uncommon sight to see a disconsolate crowd standing around regarding those new toys, the Projector Sights. At last they seem to have got over their teething troubles, but it has not been without a lot of lost sleep and the production of



"Cdr. (L) was initiated . . ."

reams of paper reporting on their latest idiosyncrasy. Perhaps one of our more spectacular tasks is to look after the red floodlighting. At night these surround the ship with a red aura that has given rise to more than one ribald comment from ships in company.

The Lower Group

Post refit trials found the whole group more than extended in coping with the basic services. The highlight of this period was the steering gear, which exhibited an alarming tendency to spread itself around the steering compartment instead of remaining in the boxes provided. Entering harbour would find the E.A.'s standing around the steering gear armed with large hammers and wooden chocks, and an E.M. standing by to stop the overworked E.A.'s from falling asleep where they stood.

At Singapore one long distance swimmer elected to swim back from Johore Bahru; the Police were a trifle worried, and he was more so when told there are crocodiles in the Straits!

Preparing for Admiral's rounds was a long drawn out affair which took a new turn when Chief Electrician Hoar, on opening a sliding door,



Armament and Flight Deck Group.

found himself being painted - whose were the running feet?

After Christmas our earlier efforts began to bear fruit; and although we lost the occasional night's sleep by a call to some hot and steamy compartment, we were able to take full advantage of the rather more relaxed routine in Yokosuka. Who else sold a Yank 2 pennies (English) for 600 Yen?

The Upper Group

With responsibility for two deck and above, the Upper Group is very much in the public eye; in fact we have the responsibility for the ship being seen at all at night, both at sea and in harbour. We have reduced floodlighting to a fine art, and at Christmas time transformed the mast into a Christmas tree by means of flashing lights which could be seen for miles around.

Our other 'tour de force' is under-way replenishment in which we have a big stake, owning the telephones and winches. Our only debacle was when the winch decided to produce large quantities of smoke at just the wrong moment - we prefer to forget that one.

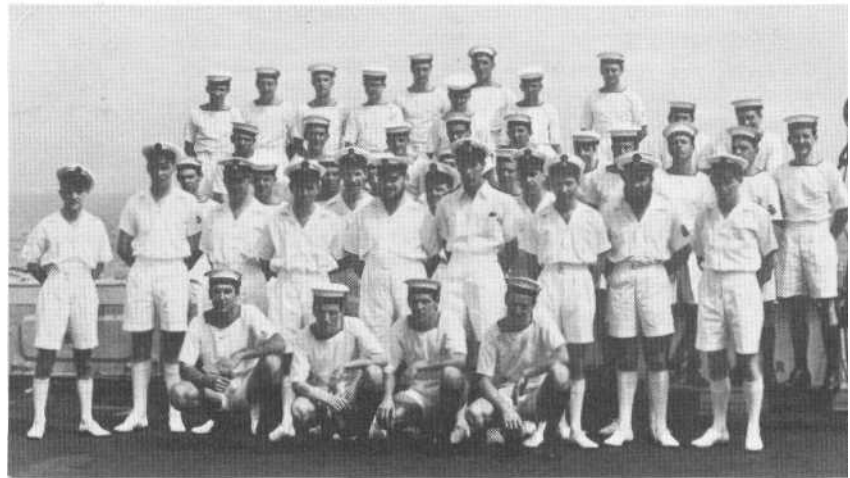
In a quieter way we keep operational about 120 fans, four galleys, the tote, about four thousand lights, twenty seven winches and numerous other electrical services. We will be able to hand over a smoothly running concern to the new commission.

The Common Services Group

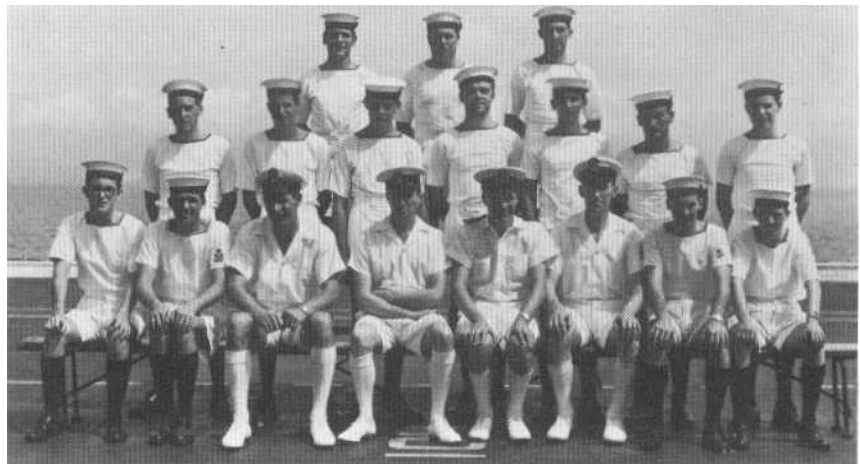
"Common Services! What are they? Heads and bathrooms?" was the normal question in the early days of the commission. Now nearly everyone knows that this Group supplies the department with countless items of stores and spare gear every week, keeps the telephone exchange, S.R.E. and main broadcast going, stabilises the "beast" way up there in the fresh air and keeps the gyro compasses going. In addition, as a regular routine, our representative in the Maintenance Planning Office feeds hundreds of cards to eager E.M.'s in the various groups and usually manages to get most of them back!



Dept. Officers.

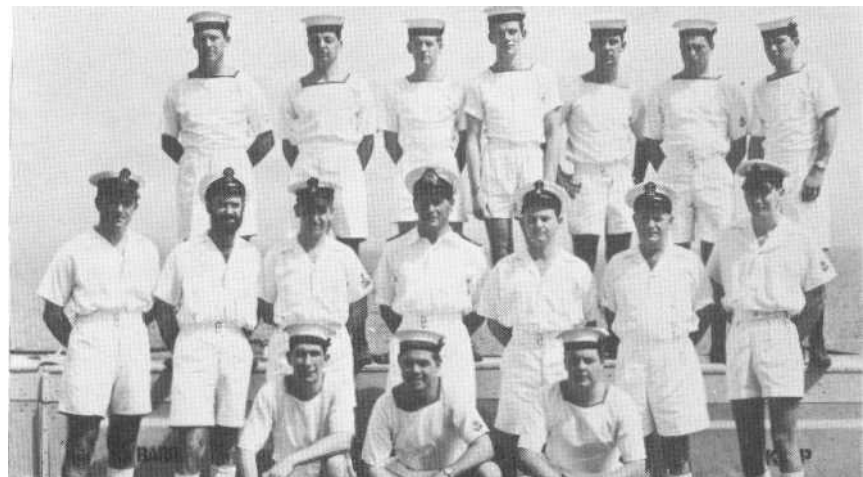


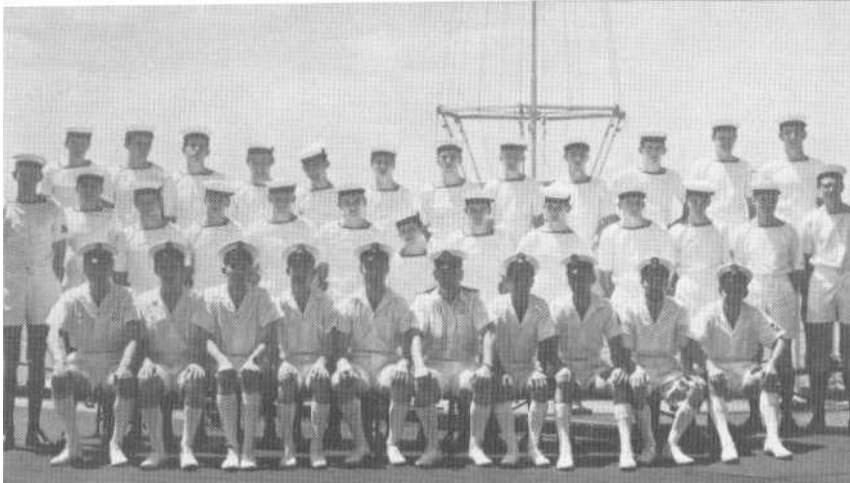
Lower Group.



Upper Group.

Common Services Group.





Radio Group.

Like other Groups, we had the post-refit chaos to clear up. Some matey managed to leave us with dialling tone on the main broadcast by connecting a heap of cables together that he was left with after a rewire. Our S.R.E. was unique in having two programmes in competition on the same channel. Stores problems were numerous, and strong arm acts in getting up boxes from the lower regions were daily routine.

Eventually the snags were sorted out and now the ship takes for granted the 126,000 telephone calls made every month and the other services we provide. Padres with louder voices or built in amplifiers would enable us to dispense with one of these!

The Radio Group

Like the other groups, we started off the commission with a small nucleus of experienced Senior Ratings, who had toiled like blacks getting everything to work at the end of the refit, and a large number of Junior Ratings for most of whom VICTORIOUS was their first ship. This problem was aggravated by the C.R.E.A. and C.R.El. being whipped away from us without relief and necessitating us making what must be a record number of local acting advancements.

There have of course been tense moments such as the occasion when on three consecutive nights people sat up winding synchros for the UHF/DF equipment only to have them blow up when put into the set. Despite these set backs, we have managed to achieve a very high rate of serviceability (both of Service equipment, and gramophones, radios

and shavers) without having to close down any sets owing to lack of maintenance staff.

We now have a fully paid up chimney sweeps Union, or more correctly Mast Cleaners Union (the Black Gang). They are expert in hanging from yardarms at alarming angles in their efforts to clean the aerials. After a session up the mast they are only distinguishable from locally entered Somalis by the colour of their eyes.

984/CDS Group

(or the Keepers of the Beast)

Apart from the early stages, when we got through an alarming number of pulse transformers and modulator valves, the Beast has been kept fairly

well in check, and so far we have been able to achieve a very high availability. Of course we have had our moments, such as when we nearly had to shut down CDS for lack of a certain valve. On this occasion we were saved by our fast talking stores L.R.E.M. who managed to trade 50 electric light bulbs for the desired valves from an American M.T.B. tied up near us at Subic.

After Christmas, on the way to Mombasa, we were really able to make use of our private sun-lounge (04 deck) both for getting our tans ready for Africa and as the best goofing platform in the ship. We had a bird's-eye view of the Crossing the Line Ceremony when Cdr. L. was initiated with the traditional ministrations; apparently he had let slip in the Wardroom one evening the fact that he had never before entered Neptune's Domain, and unfortunately he was talking to the Royal Consort at the time.

After Mombasa, large quantities of hair started to sprout from the chins of certain members of the Group. There was a rumour that this was caused by a mixture of radiation and East African beer. In fact it was a sign of homage to the bestial spirit that inhabits that searchlight shaped shrine at the forward end of the Island.



984/CDS Group.



Dental Department

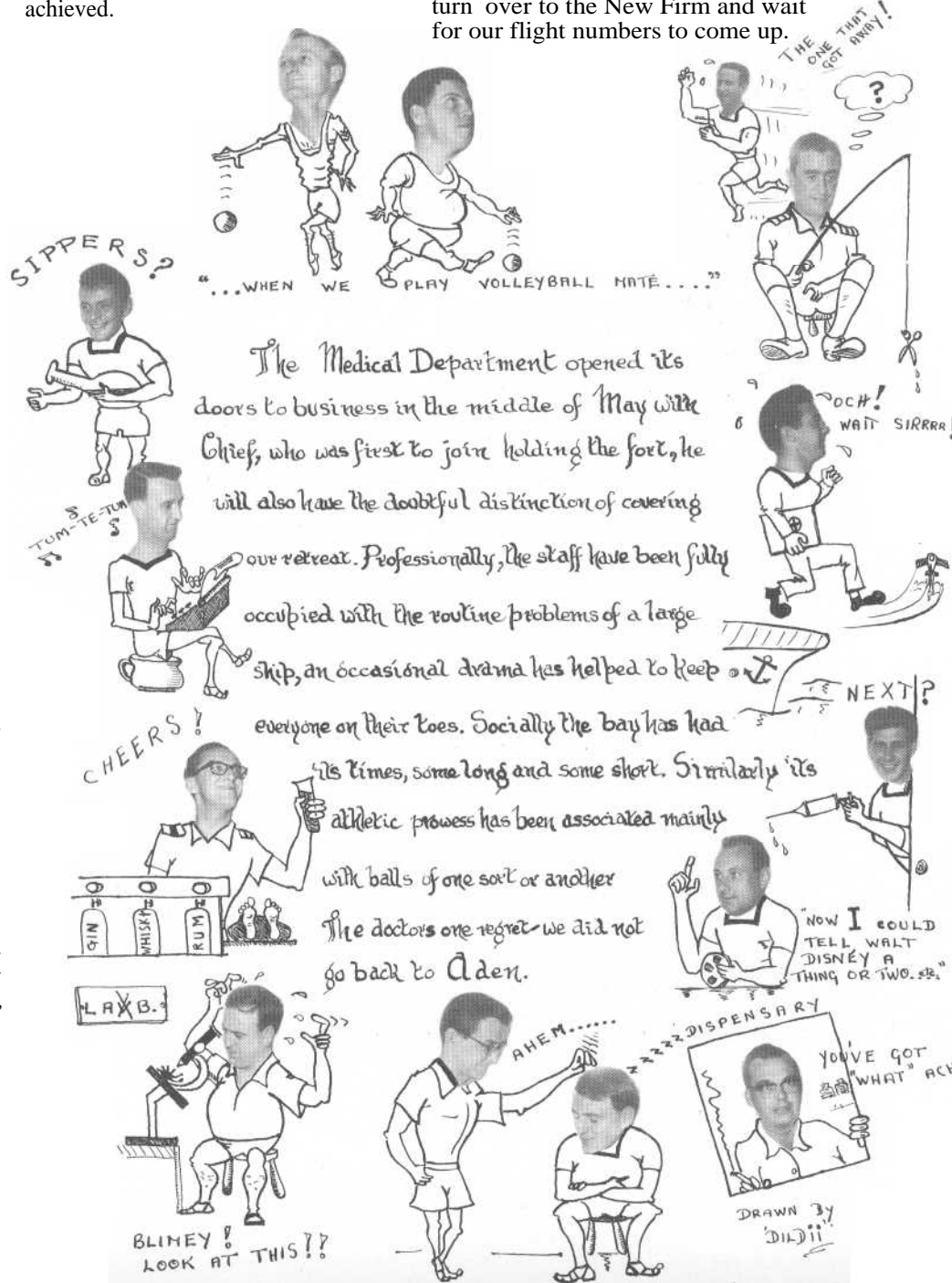
OUR PART OF SHIP got off to a good start this commission in spite of a move in high places to reduce our complement. Early days saw queues of reluctant ratings, protesting they had only just finished treatment at the last place, being subjected to another check-up. Then the squadrons arrived and it was their turn to "open wide". Lastly, the hard core who had missed every muster, were winkled out and given the once over. From then on, it was nose to the grindstone for us, but we are pleased to record that the task was completed by March. Since then, we have started going round again - six monthly check-ups.

In spite of the visions of torture conjured up in the minds of many of our clients, we can offer a few comforts that are hard to find elsewhere. For instance, a reclining chair, ice-cool air conditioning and a smooth ride, even at 26 knots. On the other hand, hissing steam, the starboard catapult, and the gunners' frolics on S.i. gundeck are all conducive to a high speed drill going off course to the detriment of the patient in the chair at the time. On one occasion, a short burst of gunfire from the deck above wrought such havoc that a rumour circulated to the effect that a bird's nest had been dislodged in one of the surgeries. Investigation proved this was not so; in fact, all that had happened was that one of our stuffed mascots had fallen from its perch.

To justify our claim that two surgeons have a full time task on board, we have cast our net far and wide to the ships and submarines in company from time to time, and a dozen or more of them have sent over ratings for treatment. "Dental Ops.2" decided he would try taking dentistry to the patient, so on one occasion, with a satchel full' of 'spanners' in addition to his cameras and bedding,

he disappeared into the desert at Aden with Seaballs for a week. His catch is not recorded, but he must have been the only fang-farrier for miles around. Later, he tried his luck aboard one of the Australian escorts where better results were achieved.

He will have further opportunities of operating in the strangest places, as well as visiting the old familiar ones, as he is staying on for the next commission. (He says he cannot afford to face the Customs). But for the rest of us, we are preparing to turn over to the New Firm and wait for our flight numbers to come up.



The Medical Department opened its doors to business in the middle of May with Chief, who was first to join holding the fort, he will also have the doubtful distinction of covering our retreat. Professionally, the staff have been fully occupied with the routine problems of a large ship, an occasional drama has helped to keep everyone on their toes. Socially the bay has had its times, some long and some short. Similarly its athletic prowess has been associated mainly with balls of one sort or another. The doctor's one regret - we did not go back to Aden.

DRAWN BY DIDI

Air Engineering Department



IN COMMON WITH THE REST of the ship, large parts of the Department were rebuilt and re-arranged during the refit in Portsmouth in preparation for the arrival of our Squadrons. The Department now has some of the most up-to-date workshops at sea, especially in the electronic and instrument fields.

Having gently eased the `mateys' out of our new palaces, we were faced with the problem of installing the very extensive range of tools, test equipment and general paraphernalia required to maintain our outfit of modern aircraft. Thanks to a last minute `gift' (on the day before sailing) of outstanding equipment by CENTAUR, we were able to leave fully booted and spurred.

The task of the department has remained the same, that is the support of the embarked Squadrons. The following sections have played a full part to achieve this aim.

Flight Deck Air Engineering

The only sub-specialisation not represented is the radio side; this oversight will be remedied as soon as a reasonable story can be fabricated. Checking fuel points and

power supply sockets at 0400 is still a thankless task, but chasing the squadron of Paloustes with a supply of fuses is even more frustrating!

Thankfully Jumbo has been infrequently used in anger, the section's Graham Hills have therefore earned their laurels by lifting boats for the Commander and stores for the pussers.

The varied demands of the aircraft resulted in the section amassing (and maintaining we hope) the largest collection of ground equipment and trollies ever seen in any carrier. They have been equally successful in producing the thickest and blackest beard ever seen on a Petty Officer Electrician (Air).

Air Radio Section

The radio section live in air conditioned palaces from which can be heard music both cool and classic. This is probably due to the fact that the S.R.E. is run mainly by these select gents - much of their equipment bears a remarkable resemblance to commercial tape recorders, then one never knows what new black boxes will be put into the aircraft next.

Notwithstanding all these activities, some 5,000 items of radio equipment were serviced in the first year of the commission, a long playing record by any standards.

Ordnance Section

This section have spent a considerable amount of time on the flight deck fitting rockets, bombs, pyrotechnics and other lethal devices to the aircraft - and frequently taking them off again. Their dexterity in this respect may well have a bearing on their prowess and success in the departmental and ship's sporting activities.

When the `O' men have not been flat out with armament programmes or servicing ejection seats (do the aircrew really spend so much time sitting in them that they require so much servicing?), they have displayed their usual versatility and have done yeomen service in all parts of the department, including Jumbo driving.

Guided Weapons Section

Here are the sophisticates of the weapon world, or so they tell us. All work is carried out behind closed

doors and the rumour that the hangar 'box' has been turned into a casino has not yet been denied. Nevertheless, Firestreaks have been seen emerging at odd hours during the day and night for '893' to play with.

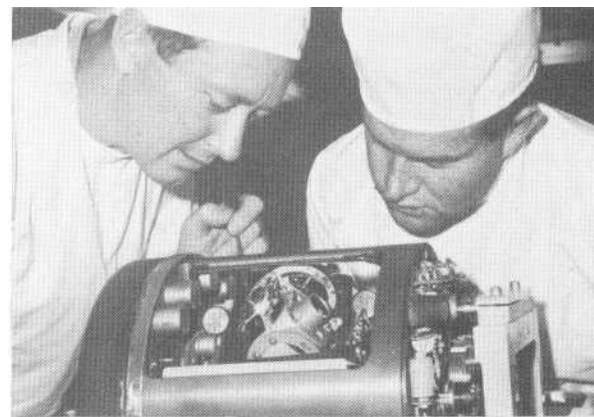
In addition, the torpedoes have been given regular 'pulheems' and once or twice '84 have made their helicopters look really aggressive by hanging them on. The Clevite submarine targets were also nurtured by the section and these toys played many successful games of hide and seek with the chopper aircrews.

Towards the latter part of the commission, the Air Weapons workshop reached a new high in popularity when one corner was used to

ture of drip trays for the Flyco Botanical Gardens has been cheerfully carried out. The heat increased even more when the hydraulic bay decided to explode early in the commission, fortunately just after one Chief had vacated it by doing a passable imitation of Roger Bannister. It is assumed that his remark that it needed painting anyway, hid some much more serious thoughts!

Electrical and Instrumental Section

The section has the most modern and also one of the oldest workshops in the department. Even the latter has taken on a new lease of life having been re-modelled by its occupants during the course of the commission. The new instrument

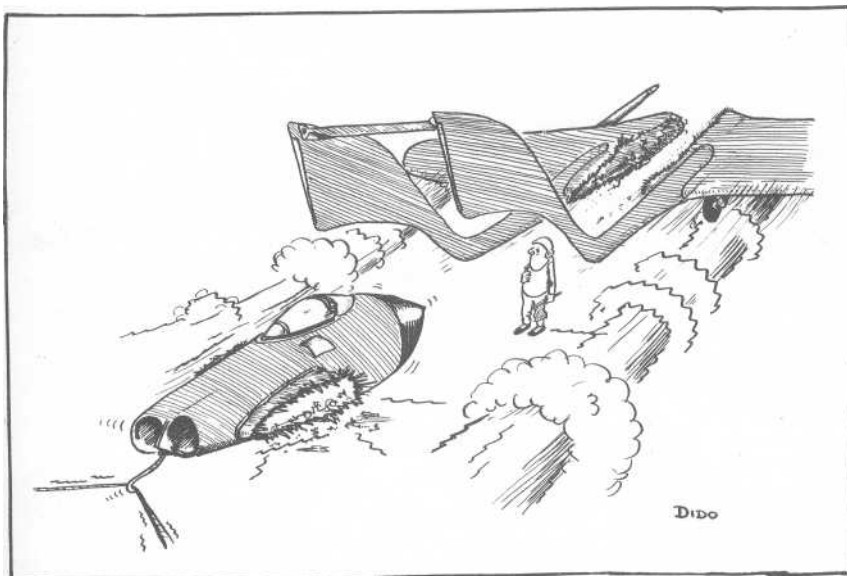


The clean room. "Forceps: scalpel!"

the same way as the sophistication of our aircraft has increased, so has the work load on the backers up, and we see no sign of a levelling off in this rising characteristic.

We can even work flat out with no aircraft onboard!

Despite all these activities, many opportunities were taken to enjoy the various "relaxations" ashore and the excellent banyans organised by the Regulating Chief; few however succeeded in fathoming his calculations of expenditure. In the shopping stakes, we must have headed the camphor wood chest league. Unfortunately, the Officers (better known as the Spastics) failed to achieve the same success in the Volley Ball league.



... "You break it - we mend it," ...

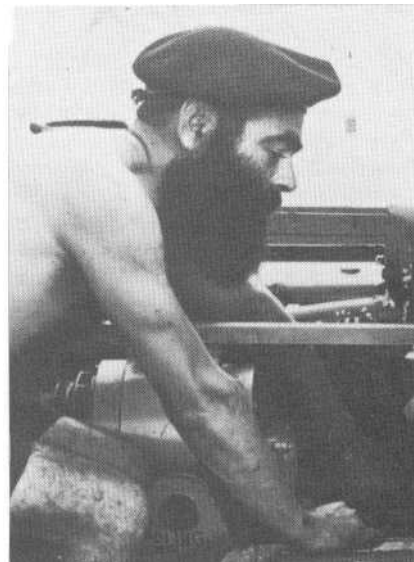
accommodate the re-commissioning office. Only time will tell whether those friendly gestures to the Recom-Vic staff will result in draft chits to Lee-on-Solent for the Hampshire natives.

Air Engineering Workshops Section

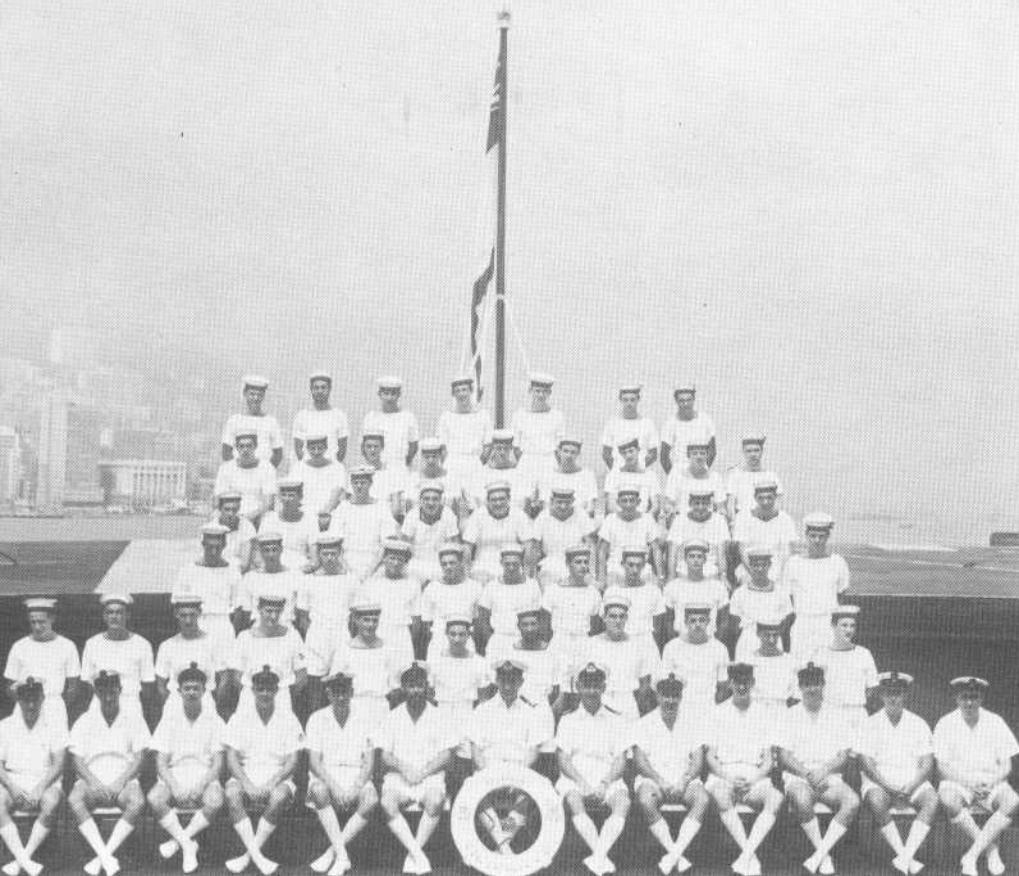
The motto of this section "You break it - we mend it", resulted in the Workshops usually being full of large pieces of aircraft - the size only being governed by the width of the doors. This workshop is one of the hotter parts of the ship, but nevertheless a wide variety of work ranging from X-rays to the manufac-

shop also includes the clean room which looks more like a sick bay than the real place! The inmates, (an unfortunately apt word appearance-wise) are frequently mistaken for Ben Casey and constantly complain that none of the heroines ever appear.

The department has functioned very happily as an amalgamated unit consisting of Officers and men of all the Air technical sub-specialisations. As is always the case in repair and maintenance work, the task is never ending, the game is as continuous as the painting of the Forth Bridge, and the result is rarely spectacular. In



The thickest beard on board. Photographs by Lt. Cdr. Pitt.



The Communication Department

A KEYWORD OF THE BRANCH is reticence. I wonder why we were always asked for the latest buzz? One buzz that not even our most fertile brain could have thought up was that the ship would be paying off after 14 months in commission.

Much to everyones surprise and relief, the Bridge Wireless Office really did work, and there was even electricity to the signal projectors, when we slipped out of Portsmouth for our first sea trials. We were not perfect though, and amongst other things learned that "A" is Alfa and not Alpha. Bless those dear little Wrens in Whitehall Wireless who kept us to the rails crypto-wise!

Many new friends were made at Aden where we played the Army Signal Squadrons at several games, and diplomatically lost them all so that they wouldn't feel too upset at buying the beer afterwards. Here we also saw a spate of beard growing, when the indians tried to compete with the chiefs and lost.

As we left Aden, an M.F.V. was booked by signal, and a staff banyan was held on arrival at Singapore. This was a great success, even if the fishing was not so good. The Crypto Yeoman, after having had a hook

bitten clean in half, remarked, "If they are that big I don't want 'em." S.C.O. 2 caught the dog, and within a day or two, while he was water skiing, something dared to disagree with the S.C.O., bit his foot, and put him on his back in TERROR Sick Bay for a week.

Hong Kong saw the usual splurge on tattoos, and some of the staff have now run out of advertisement space. We also managed to lose as many watches and I.D. cards as most other departments.

Traffic flow throughout the commission has steadily increased and, in this first year, we have handled over 33,000 signals and telegrams. Discounting the odd internal distribution error, only 5 of these were mishandled onboard resulting in non-delivery. This is .015% (or an error rate which would be the envy of the G.P.O. or any commercial cable concern). The crypto staff have handled one and a quarter million groups, and, according to a not very reliable source, the Flag-Deck staff have cleared away 1,000,000 buckets of soot, 10,000 applescores and 15,000 goffer (goofer) cups.

And we never did get a cake!

Meteorology, Education and Work Study

The Weather Guessers

THE METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT did extremely well for the ship this commission. Flying was interrupted only twice because of the weather, and we provided plenty of cooling, cleansing rain for RAS days (instant clean spuds). Two Typhoons, which would have created havoc with any other ship, were successfully steered away - one to do its worst in the empty spaces of the N. Pacific and the other to bring a more than welcome foot of rain to Hong Kong.

Incidental tasks included;
2120 Weather observations,
1478 Aircrew Briefings,
100 Radio-sonde ascents
(= 1 cake)

The Weather Guessers did not spend all their time trapped in the Met. Office gazing at the sea-weed; they supplied representatives for the Ship's tennis, sailing, cricket, rugby (he's an hon. tea-boat member anyway), soccer, golf and hockey teams. Met. teams battled in the Volley ball and Deck-hockey competitions.

All but one of the department's ratings passed an advancement examination or was advanced during the commission; the one who didn't has volunteered for transfer to the Royals - there must be a moral somewhere!

Education

HEARD IN THE SCHOOLROOM

"Sir, I want to see you about taking a correspondence course."

"Oh yes! Which kind, Forces Scheme, R.N. Barracks or City and Guilds?"

"Well Sir, it's got to be in Electrical Engineering."

"I see. Are you aiming at some particular qualification?"

"I want to take an Honours Degree in Electrical Engineering."

"That's easily arranged - let's fill up this form. Have you the necessary 'A' levels?"

"No Sir, that's where I must start."

"We can arrange that on board. We've just the men to get you

through in no time at all - one physicist, one chemist and two excellent mathematicians all rarin' to go! What H.E.T.s have you got?"

"Well Sir, I haven't any yet."

"Did you pass any 'O' levels at school before you joined?"

"No Sir."

"We hold classes in all H.E.T. subjects. What are your maths like?"

"I haven't done any since leaving school."

"I suppose you've forgotten most of your Trig and Algebra."

"We never done any, Sir."

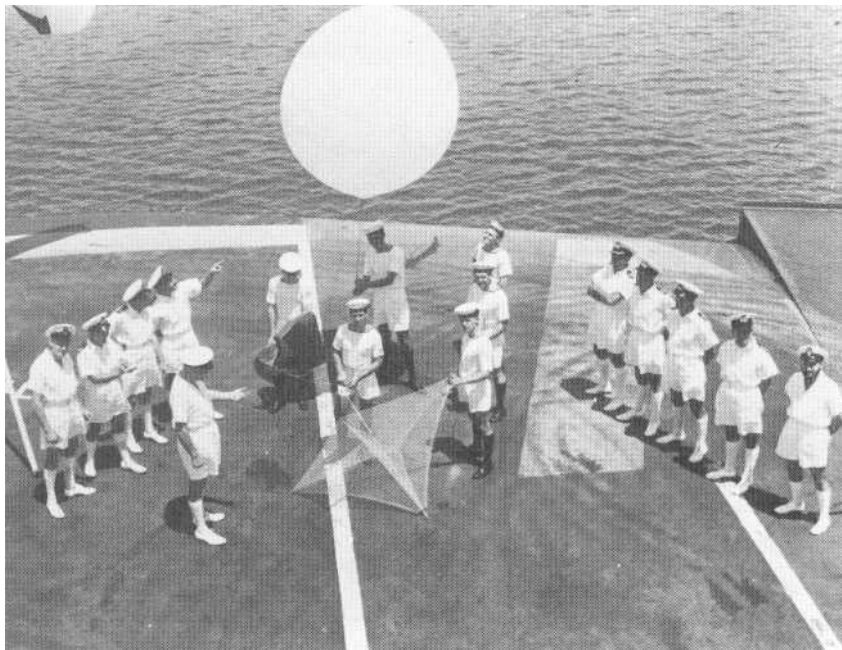
"You realise that you have a long way to go before you get that degree. Who gave you the idea?"

"Me mum keeps sending me newspaper cuttings about the wonderful educational facilities in the Navy, and the Chief says I must qualify educationally for Leading-rate."

"So that's it! Come along to my E.T.L.R. class at 1600, and in twenty years, who knows!"



A knotty work-study problem?



Fleet Work Study Team 15

"Fleet Work Study is the systematic and critical examination of all factors affecting human work. Its object is to increase operational efficiency by advising Commands on ways of achieving better use of manpower and material." Work Study is a joint operation; teams are trained to assist departments to develop better methods for themselves.

Fleet Work Study Team 15 is allocated to the Flag Officer Aircraft Carriers. After serving in VICTORIOUS last commission, the team transferred to ARK ROYAL and so missed the refit. An advance party flew home from Mombasa, in June 1963, to assist in developing a drill for the modified aircraft emergency barrier installation. The main body of the team rejoined in September, at Singapore.

On arrival, the team set about improving conditions in the Senior Ratings' Dining Hall, where the long tables and benches left little room for movement. After a number of new layouts had been considered, the dining hall was refurnished with tables for four arranged in compact blocks with wide gangways between. Chairs replaced the benches.

Another job, which affected most of the ship's company, was to help plan the arrangements for recommissioning at Singapore.

Off duty, the team's interests included golf, fishing, sailing and refereeing football. At the children's parties they ran the fishing stall.

Navigation

AS MOST OF US ARE AWARE, all the best things come in small parcels; there are exceptions, but the smart group on the right is not one of them.

We are proud to say that we have had our clean fingers in most of the ship's pies, be it in running the routine, steering a straight course, making the RAS rendezvous, turning into wind or simply studying human nature returning from a run ashore. Incidentally, if it hadn't been for that careful study of heavenly bodies day and night on the way to Yokosuka, we might never have got there to study day ... well, never mind.

T. A. S. - Underwater Warfare

OUR TORPEDOES have had a quiet life this year - you can fit just so much into a programme and no more - and, after a successful start, the Sonar went sick at half-time. Nevertheless, eight of our junior ratings managed to achieve their 'star' rates; some of them gained temporary Australian accents while extending their operating experience!

We also claim to operate the



Finally, we wish to squash the completely unjustified rumour that the reason that the ship did not return home was because we had lost the relevant charts and didn't know how to get there.

The Diving Team

THE SHIP'S DIVING TEAM has had a very interesting commission, spending over 160 hours underwater in a total of some 250 dives. We were lucky to have changed to compressed air equipment and so be much more mobile.

Operation Awkward is aptly named for a ship of this size, and we tried it several times. We also carried out a number of dives to look at the rudder and screws when excessive vibration suggested that all was not well.

R.F.A. RELIANT was one of our main customers, and we returned her to an operational state on four separate occasions. Twice in six weeks, her screw was badly fouled when leaving Mombasa by a six-inch manilla, and at sea by some 35 turns of heavy jack-stay wire. To do the second job, a team was flown to her by helo; the screw was cleared, at anchor, after four hours diving.

Not to be outdone, VIC' dropped the usual quantity of stores for us to retrieve from the sludge at the bottom of Singapore harbour. It was disappointing to find that, even in the East, dockyards have the same filthy black water we know so well in 'Pompey'.

We mustn't forget the two SAR divers, trained to help aircrew escape from a ditched aircraft. They spent long hours flying, and although they

Demolition by the hour, day or job.

