



*Subic*

We spent a few days in flying exercises in the Singapore area, and then moved on to Subic in the Philippines. While on passage great interest was aroused one afternoon in an R.A.F. Shackleton which did a mail drop, and also during this period we did our first three ship Replenishment At Sea. To help pass the time we were able to hold an Inter-ship quiz with the ship's company and *H.M.A.S. Parramatta* provided an interesting answer to the question "Who painted the Painted Hall at Greenwich?" - their answer being "The men under punishment".

Subic was the first foreign port we visited and is a vast American base, leased from the Philippine Government. Perhaps more famous than the base itself is the "city" of Olongopo which is adjacent to the base. Olongopo has a reputation second to none amongst the sailors of the world, and on both the nights we were in Subic, over a 1,000 went ashore, and on the whole behaved very well. The Americans were most friendly and integration went so far that one rating who had been on a visit to an American Carrier, returned on board in a complete U.S. Naval Uniform, even with Vietnam combat ribbons! Needless to say this is not to be taken as evidence of the integration of the two navies. While here the Royal Marine Band were in great demand and their concerts were most popular with our American cousins.

Short as the visit to Subic was, it was a welcome break, and we sailed once more on September 14th for more exercises with the Americans - cross operating with their carriers and then on to Hong Kong. It was



*More Exercises ...*



*... with Americans*

the time of the year for cyclones, and while on passage we were almost diverted to help the *S.S. August Moon* aground on Pratas Reef in the South China Sea, but the U.S. Carrier *Oriskany* got there first and we continued on our way. The last few days before Hong Kong saw certain hirsute members of the ship's company preparing for the final of the Beard Growing contest to be judged in Hong Kong. We also achieved the 1,000th deck landing on September 17th and two days later the Met. Office produced the 100th weather report. It was at this time that a Stork flew over the ship - it was a black one - this omen produced a variety of interpretations from various "ancient mariners", none of which were fulfilled.

After a fairly rough passage, the morning of September 23rd saw us steam into Hong Kong, and even at first glance one sensed that here was one of the most thrilling cities in the world. We were to find that it was also where one spent a lot of money. Nevertheless, the delights of this British Crown Colony were enjoyed, and there were very many - ranging from the many bars of Wanchai and Kowloon to the more sophisticated ones of the Hilton and the Mandarin Hotels - trips up the Peak in what must be the most impressive tramway in the world to be further impressed on reaching the Peak itself with the panorama of islands and the teeming metropolis of both Hong Kong and Kowloon, with the harbour bustling with boats of all shapes and sizes. It was here the final of the Beard Growing contest took place. As usual in harbour we had lots of visitors - a second one from the Minister of Defence (Navy), Mr. J. P. W.



*Hong Kong ...*



*1,000th Deck, Landing*



*... one of the most thrilling cities in the world*



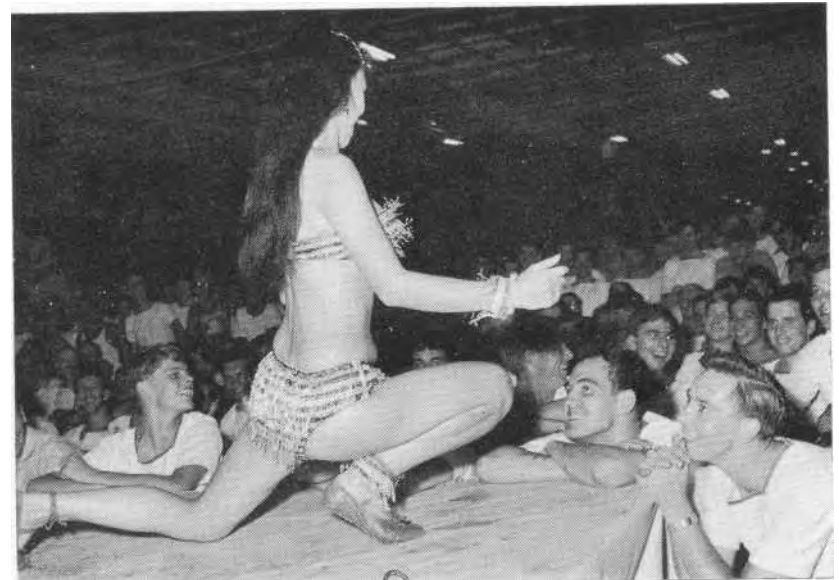
*The delights of the British Crown Colony were enjoyed*



*Beard Growing Contest*



*The most impressive tramway in the world*



*We had lots of visitors*



*A lot of hard work . . . .*

Mallalieu, and perhaps our most honoured guests were the 200 orphaned children who came to a party on board. A lot of hard work goes into these parties and the genuine pleasure of the children is ample reward for the efforts made to entertain them.

It was here in Hong Kong that we said good-bye to Captain (now Rear Admiral) Davenport and welcomed his successor, Captain McIntosh, D.S.O., M.B.E., D.S.C., R.N., and it was under his command that we sailed from Hong Kong on October 4th. Our course lay south past the Philippines and across the Equator to Australia. It was while on passage on October 7th that our first fatal accident occurred when a Wessex helicopter of 814 Squadron crashed and four of our shipmates lost their lives. It was a tragic happening, and it serves to emphasise to us all the serious purpose of our existence as an operational carrier. We paid our respects to their passing at a memorial service on the Flight Deck, as we moved south through the San Bernadino Straits. October 11th saw the third Spic Vic in preparation for our visit to Australia. But there was some serious business to transact before we were to enjoy the hospitality of "Down Under". On Saturday, October 15th we were boarded by the Monarch of the Sea - King Neptune and his beautiful Queen, together with his court and law enforcement officers. They held sway on the Flight Deck and after decorating various personalities, duly lathered and ducked in the traditional way a representative number of the ship's company who were passing this way for the first time. It was great fun,



*. . . . goes into these parties*



*Captain (now Rear Admiral) Davenport*



*The third spic Vic in preparation . . . .*

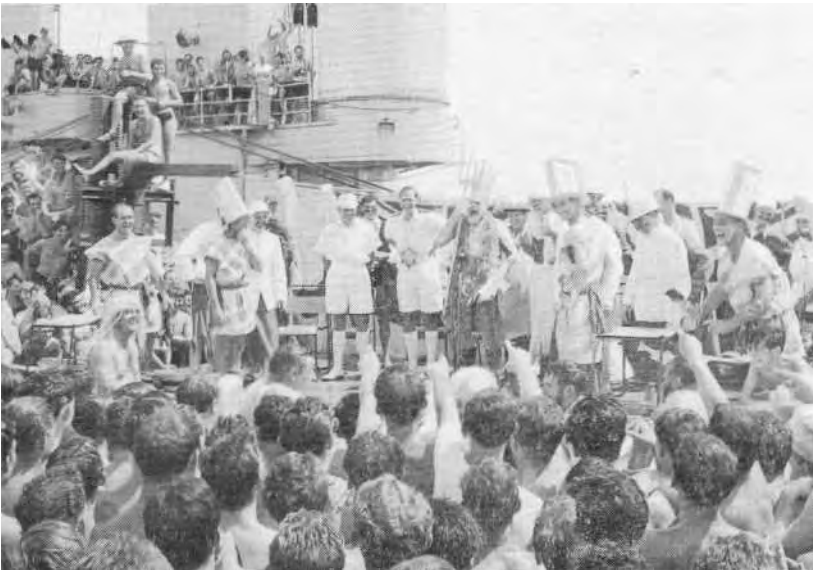
but it was followed by the most extensive and serious exercise of the commission - Exercise "Swordhilt". For the next twelve days as we passed down the eastern seaboard of Australia we worked with the Royal Australian Navy and with the Americans. The fortunes of war varied, but we believe that *Victorious* acquitted herself well and proved her worth as a carrier, and her versatility and value as an operational unit of the Fleet. On the day before we entered Sydney history was made in the fly past over the city as among the aircrews taking part were two Vice Admirals - Vice Admiral Mills and Vice Admiral McNicol, Chief of the Australian Naval Staff. The following signal was made to Mod. (Navy) at the time "Believe this first occasion so much Vice airborne in one flight".



*. . . . for the visit to Australia*

Twenty-three days after leaving Hong Kong *Victorious* entered the famous Sydney Harbour, dominated by its equally famous Bridge, at the head of an impressive column of ships. The visit to Sydney had begun, and what a visit. For 12 days we were subject to the generous hospitality of our Australian hosts. The individual details are too numerous to mention, and all of us who took part will have our own special memories.

Memories of another kind were evoked in Sydney, when under the inspiration of the Commanding Officer 814 Squadron we purchased a Firefly - veteran of the Korean War from the Australians. We must have been the only aircraft carrier in the world to have bought our own aircraft; and on our return we presented it to the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton.



*King Neptune and his Queen . . . .*



*hold sway on the Flight Deck*



*Vice Admiral Mills  
and  
Vice Admiral McNicol*



*The visit to Sydney ... and what a visit*



*The famous Sydney Harbour ...*



*... dominated by its equally famous Bridge*



*We purchased a Firefly*



*Fremantle*



*Miss Western  
Australia  
stirring the  
Christmas Pudding*



*We Entertained*

For many it was an opportunity to visit and meet relatives and friends now living in this great Commonwealth, and many took the chance to see something of the country. A party from the ship on the day we left Sydney, set out in the ship's Landrovers to drive across Australia to Fremantle, our next port of call. They arrived a day before we did. It was here that we had a visit from Miss Western Australia who gave a hand at stirring the Christmas pudding. In both Sydney and Fremantle we entertained and were entertained. Thousands in both places visited the ship and in both we had the usual children's parties - perhaps the best way to sum up our visit to Australia can be done in the words of a letter from one of the small boys who came to the party in Sydney:

*Dear Captain McIntosh,*

*Thank you, for inviting us to see your ship. I enjoyed every minute of it. I liked the planes and of course the boat. You have a great ship. I felt like I was on land when I was watching the cartoons. You must have a good crew to keep her in that shape. 2,500 men! I wonder how the cook feels? Well I want to join the Navy. I hope we didn't make too much mess in the dining hall. Well thank the men for me. Have to go now lots of luck in the war.*

*From Mark Harris.*

*P.S. - Keep her afloat.*



*Thousands visited the Ships*

Australia gave us a wonderful welcome, but the time came when we had to leave, and on the morning of November 25th we slipped from a jetty lined with many friends, and set sail for Singapore. On the way we passed off the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island. At Cocos we had a request for the services of a Chaplain, and the ship's

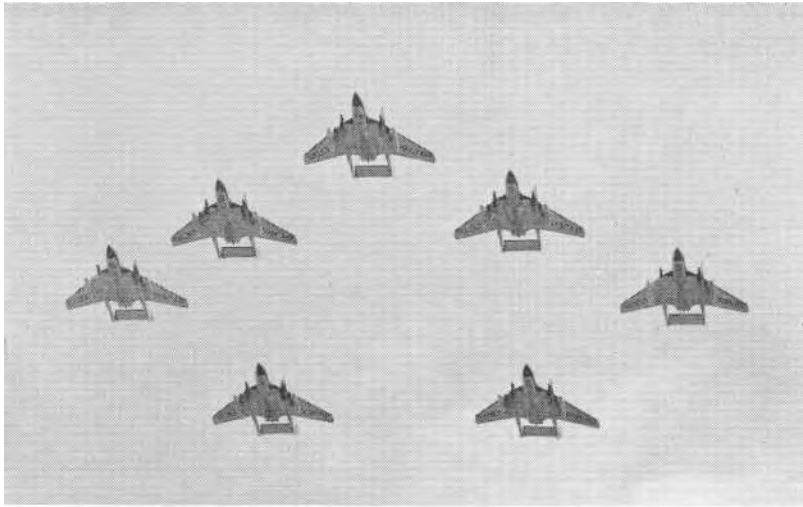


*and were Entertained*



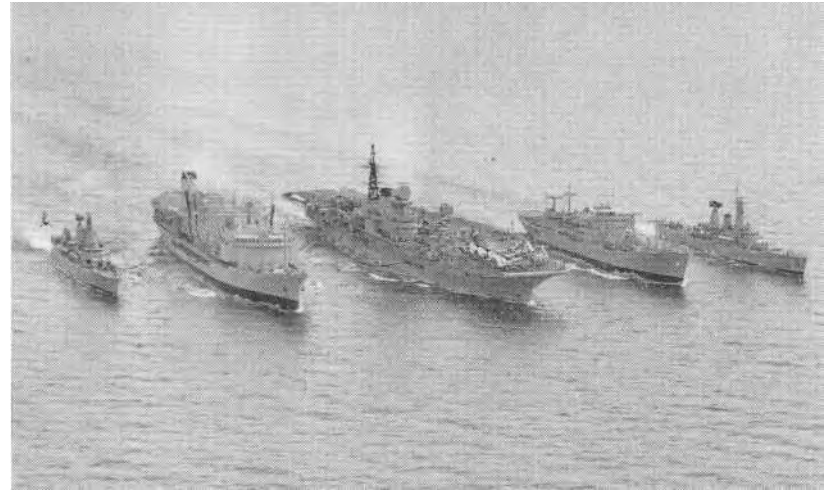
*Direction Island*





*Fly Past, Christmas Island*

Chaplain was landed and celebrated Holy Communion, and also baptised a baby. His visit was the first of that of a priest since the Chaplain of the *Ark Royal* nine months before. Also a party of officers and ratings were landed on Direction Island, one of the Cocos Group to conduct



*A five ship R.A.S.*



*Darts Knock-out  
Competition  
won by  
39 Mess*



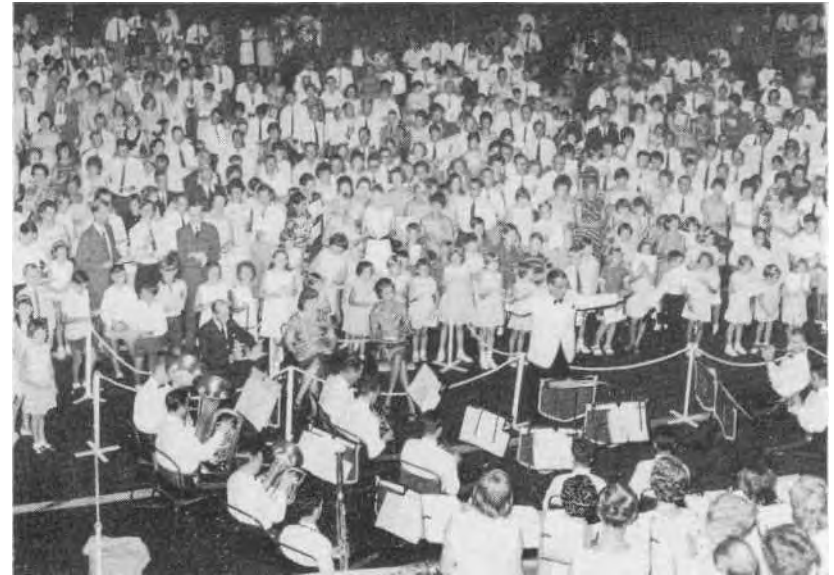
*An  
excellent  
Ship's  
Concert*

a survey, and they returned with stories of the rugged life they had endured. We moved on to Christmas Island, and staged a fly past over this lonely outpost of empire. It was during this passage back to Singapore that we achieved a five Ship R.A.S. and also staged an excellent ship's concert ably compered by the P.T.I. - and ran a Darts Knock-out competition won by 39 mess. On we went through the Sunda Straits and eventually came to rest at No. 8 berth in the Naval Base at Singapore.

Perhaps rest is not the right word, as with the approach of Christmas and the serious business of a Dockyard Maintenance Period we were to be kept fully occupied. A lot of essential work was completed during this period and Christmas was observed in the traditional way, although it was not easy to imagine it in the humid heat of Singapore. A lot took advantage of the spell in harbour to take some local leave, and the usual



*The  
Captain  
visiting  
the  
Sick Bay*



*Christmas Eve Carols on the Flight Deck*



*... and the Mess Deck on Christmas Day*



*Far East Fleet Boxing Championships*



*16 Bells at Midnight on the Quarterdeck*



*Vice Admiral  
Sir Frank  
Twiss,  
K.C.B., D.S.C.*



*Rear Admiral W.D. O'Brian. C.B., D.S.C.*

round of sporting activity was carried out. The ship was decorated internally by messes, and externally the Electrical Department did a splendid job with a Christmas Tree in lights on the Starboard side of the island. On Christmas Eve, carols were sung on the Flight Deck, and over 1,000 attended from the Base and the ships in harbour, and the Quarterdeck was full for a service of Holy Communion at midnight. Christmas Day itself passed quietly with the Captain visiting the mess decks and the Sick Bay. In the week following the ship staged a pantomime "Vic Whittington" in the Sultan Theatre at Terror, and the Boxing Team won in no uncertain fashion the Far East Fleet Novices' Boxing Championships. This period in harbour passed quickly and before we realised it, it was New Year's Eve and at midnight on the Quarterdeck the youngest member of the ship's company rang 16 bells to mark the passing of 1966 and the advent of 1967. Four days later we were on our way again, and ready to begin the second half of our foreign leg.

The mixture was somewhat the same as before. We embarked our Squadrons and set off for the exercise area. While here C.O.M.F.E.F. Vice Admiral Sir Frank Twiss, K.C.B., D.S.C., and F.O.A.C. Rear Admiral W. D. O'Brien, C.B., D.S.C., took the opportunity to pay us a visit. Twelve days after sailing we entered Hong Kong. The preceding three days before our arrival saw the roughest weather of the commission and Hong Kong greeted us with a temperature few degrees above freezing point. For the first time since leaving home we found ourselves back in



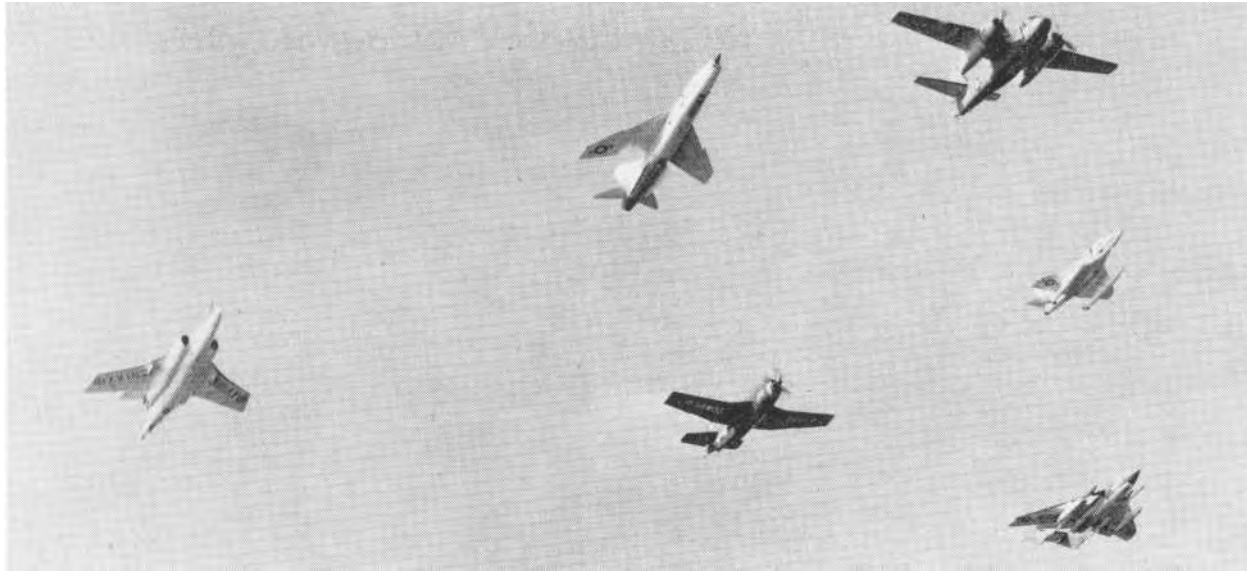
*The roughest weather of the Commission*



*Miss Ann Shelton kindly sang to us in the Hangar*



*Chinese contract labour chipping the Flight Deck*



*On we steamed . . . for some more flying*



*Sea Vixen*