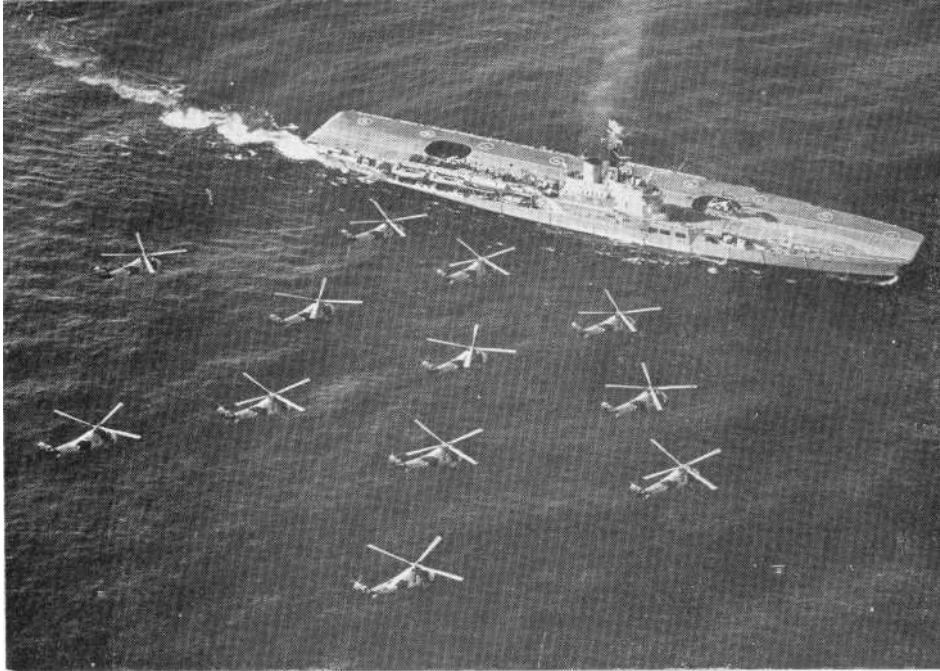


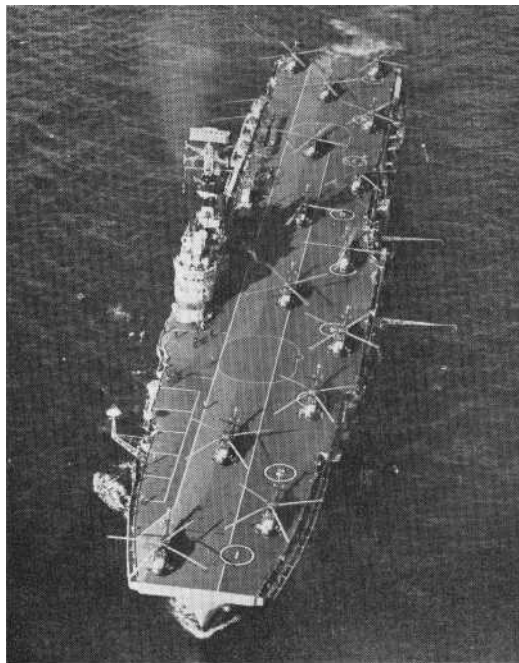


H.M.S. ALBION

1964-1966



H.M.S. ALBION
and
848 N.A.C.S.



INTRODUCTION OF THE BOOK OF THE COMMISSION

By CAPTAIN J. H. ADAMS



The aim of this booklet is to provide an illustrated souvenir of HMS ALBION's second commission as a Commando Ship. By the time it is printed I will have left you, taking with me many memories of the first twenty months and you will have completed a further period with Captain Place. I wish that I had been able to share the whole commission with you, for whatever you individually may have made of it, we have had an interesting and worthwhile time, with new experiences, lessons learnt, new countries visited, and best of all, new friends made and kept.

Our role of providing a mobile platform for the Commandos, 848 Naval Air Squadron and embarked Infantry Battalions has made a contribution in combating the confrontations and crises about the world. Commando ships are currently amongst the most useful vessels that Britain has, and we have all played our part in the operation of HMS ALBION, even though the forests of Borneo and the mountains of the Radfan must seem unreal and remote to the majority of you.

The Navy is what you yourself make of it and this means giving as well as taking. I would like to thank the groups of people who have gone out of their way to help entertain us during those long periods at sea, namely, ALBION ARGUS staff, the ALBION BROADCASTING CENTRE and the various personalities involved in arranging all our games, recreational activities and the concert party. There are many other facets of our life together, and I know that this booklet will recall them to us after the years have passed and memories of the commission grow dim.

May you all have a happy homecoming and well earned leave with your families. Good luck to you and good fortune wherever you go; I hope that we may meet again, ashore or afloat, some not too distant day.

Sincere congratulations to REAR ADMIRAL J. H. ADAMS, M.V.O. on his well deserved promotion, from all in ALBION.

HMS ALBION - SECOND COMMISSION AS A COMMANDO SHIP

(Vth ALBION - Vth COMMISSION)

In case you have forgotten, or in case you did not know, it all started on the 14th May 1964. The ship did not even float in those days, but the fishing at the far end of the dry dock was reputed to be the best in Portsmouth. It was a warm summer and the march to and from the Barracks was pleasant exercise - as was the daily dash over to number 38 abolition; but as Autumn settled in it became distinctly chilly. So we swept the last dockyard matey over the side, slapped a splash of paint over the rust and dirt and sailed for sea trials on the 23rd of November 1964, immediately after our formal Commissioning Ceremony.

We performed a variety of evolutions, but amidst it all we found time to visit Dover to have the Mayors and Mayoresses of the Cinque Ports to lunch, and then we went west to visit our Commander-in-Chief at Plymouth. And then back to the 'yard for Christmas leave, followed by the work-up in the New Year, starting at Portland where it was rough, and finishing at Gibraltar where it was less rough. The piece in the middle was very rough! 848 Squadron joined us for this trip, and we carried out our first assault exercise of the commission with 41 Commando in February 1965 somewhere near a place called Predannock. More home leave seemed a good idea at this stage, so we moved back to Portsmouth for a spell, finally sailing past the "Still and West" for eighteen months foreign service on the 12th March 1965.

We took another brief look at Gibraltar, fired the odd missile at Filfla as we passed Malta and by five o'clock on Monday, 22nd March the first Port Said gully gully man was performing on board. Through the Red Sea and into Aden harbour in procedure Alpha. Good shopping was punctuated by the occasional grenade explosion, but we stuck it out for a week before moving up the coast for Exercise Jebel Jumper with 45 Commando. We finally sailed from Aden on the 9th April, with Singapore next on the agenda. But with the game parks of East Africa less than a thousand miles to the south, the opportunity was taken to drop in at Mombasa for a few days sunshine on those Indian Ocean beaches, plus culture at the Casablanca and New Florida museums. We crossed the line on passage, which provided an excuse for a decent bath; we also visited a dusty little island called Abd Al Kuri, and there was no excuse for this unless you happened to collect sea shells.

Mombasa dropped over the horizon on Sunday the 18th April and in view of this astonishing occurrence, we headed east for Singapore, taking a peep at the Seychelles and a sniff at Gan en route. The 28th April witnessed HMS ALBION's ceremonial arrival at Singapore Naval Base, but after only three days in our new home we embarked on a cruise of the North Borneo seaside resorts. This area was to become our second home, and the Old Grey Ghost plied between the two for the next month. Our trip to Hong Kong at the end of May 1965, where we wore the flag of the Fleet Commander, was an unexpected bonus, but unfortunately our hasty departure in the face of a tropical storm was equally unexpected only five days later. Back to Singapore and Borneo, and that was our diet for June, July, August and September. You name it, we went there - Sibiu, Kuching, Labuan, Jesselton, Jason Bay, Tawau, Terendak, Pulau Tioman, Khota Belud - usually with half the British Army embarked. When not on tour we played as hard as we worked and items such as the ship's concert party, the swimming gala and the sailing regatta occupied a prominent place on the 1965 fixture list.

But enough is as good as a rest, and a change is as good as a feast, so on the 12th October 1965 we lifted the ship out of the groove that runs between Singapore and Borneo and a week later took a two-day holiday in the Seychelles, where the black parrot and the coco-de-mer feature high on the list of tourist delights. Then on to Mombasa to re-visit old friends, and likewise at Aden, where we arrived on the 8th November. The political climate was unchanged, so we slipped over to Assab in Ethiopia and Djibouti in French Somaliland on consecutive weekends. Interesting but not exotic.

We finally left Aden on the 25th November and returned to our former haunts off Borneo three weeks later. Christmas in Singapore, with a carol service on the flight deck. New Year's Eve in Singapore, with the ship sailing for Hong Kong the following morning. There we spent ten days "rest and recreation" and Captain Place assumed command of the ship from Rear Admiral Adams. And then more Singapore and Borneo, with the pace slowing appreciably when the ship's docking period started at the end of February 1966. Shore accommodation and ten days station leave - no more need be said. The second shakedown cruise of the commission started on the 20th April, and amongst other things, we visited Pulau Tioman twice in two days to satisfy the banyan fans. And on to Labuan and another roulement to carry us through to May.

To confound the pessimists, we actually got to Kobe in Japan and although the willow pattern and cherry blossom illusion was destroyed, suki yaki, sake, shrines and steam baths satisfied most palates. Next stop was Labuan, which curiously enough seemed quiet by contrast, and then a three week maintenance period at "home" in Singapore to while away the month. Enough has already been written on Exercise Long Hop, and the subsequent visit to Hong Kong at the end of July understandably looms larger, if not more clearly, in our memories. From then on, with the advance party safely on board, it was a down hill run. Farewell visits to Singapore and Borneo, and then the East of Suez weight was cheerfully passed to HMS BULWARK in the Red Sea in the later half of August. It is not true that we carried out a full power trial whilst in the Suez Canal, but no time was lost on the run home and Portsmouth was reached in early September. And those of you who are still on board will know that from then on - - it will start all over again.

THE BEGINNING AND THE END



Leaving
Portsmouth

Arriving Singapore
("A" Station)



IN BETWEEN



Gibraltar

Aden
with its crater

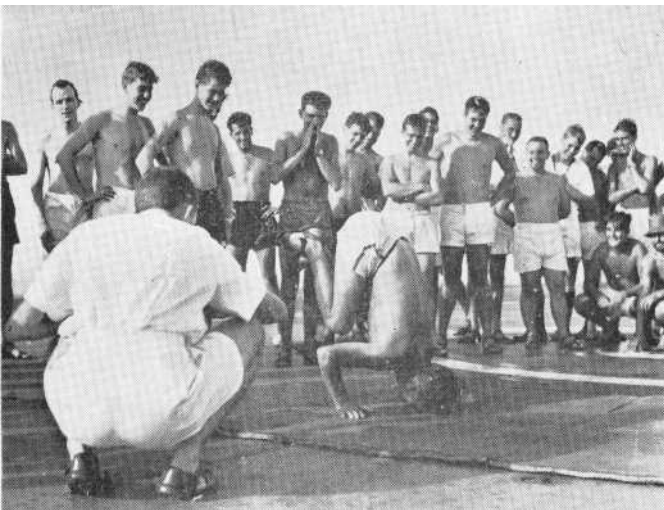


Mombasa
and the Oceanic

FLIGHT DECK (without the aircraft)



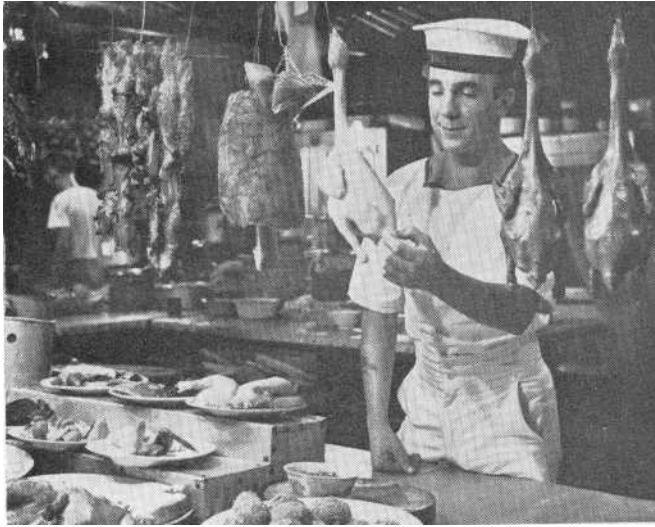
for Work
The Bosun RASing.
and Play



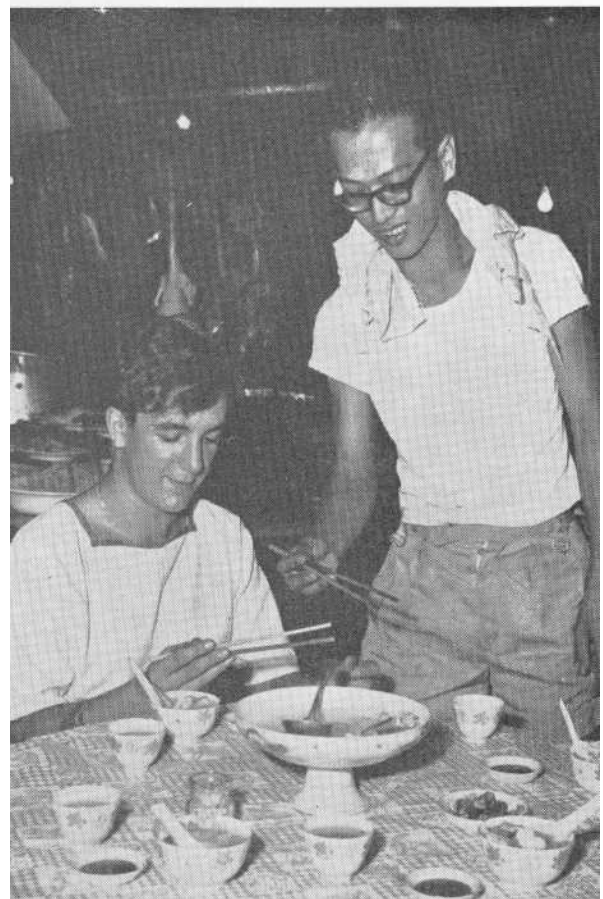
Flight Deck Sports



EXOTIC FOODS



Oriental Fleshpots?



Try it this way.



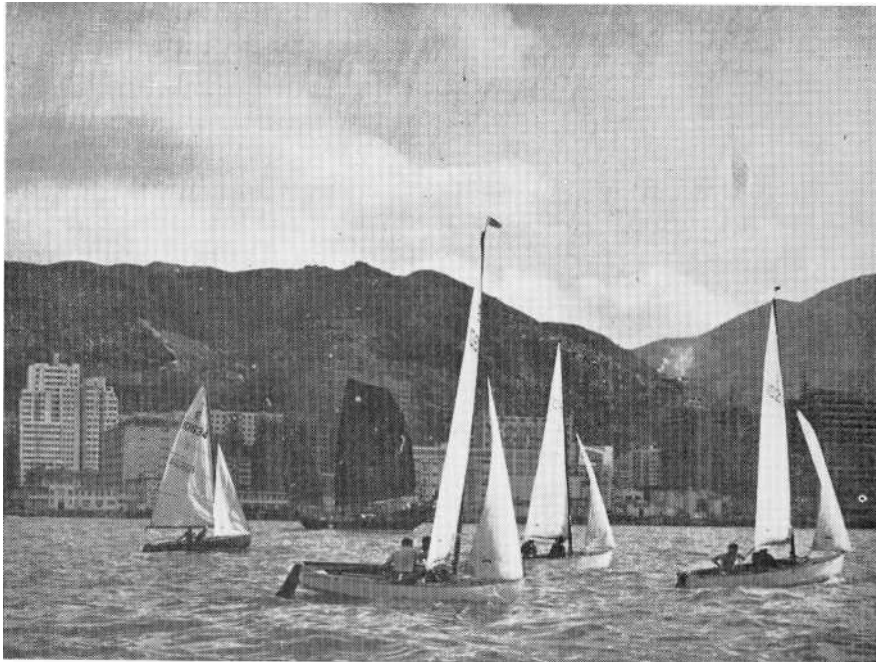
Pulau Tionnan

Coconuts

SAILING - for fun



Mombasa



Hong Kong

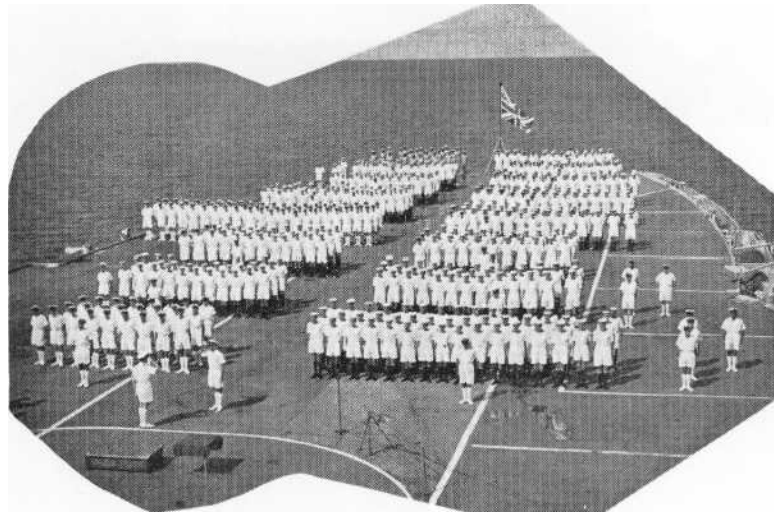
UNIFORMS for all occasions



for Children's parties



for entertaining



for Sundays



for Uckers



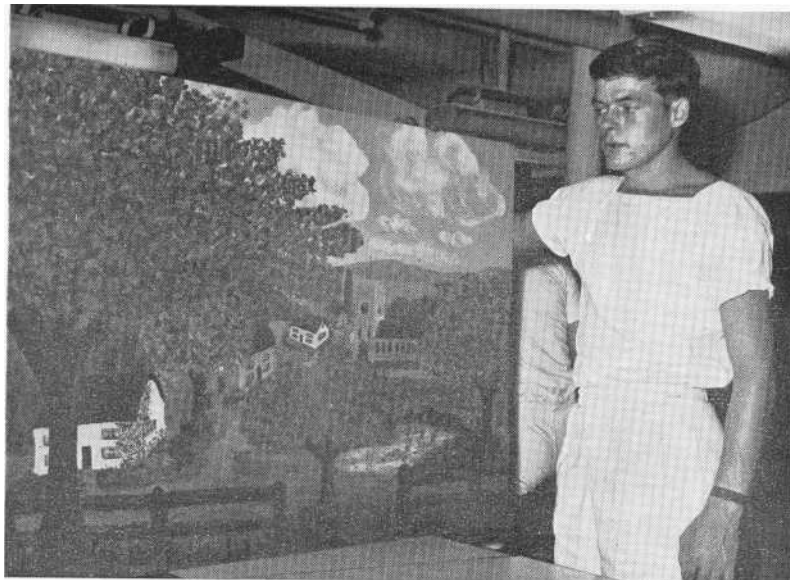
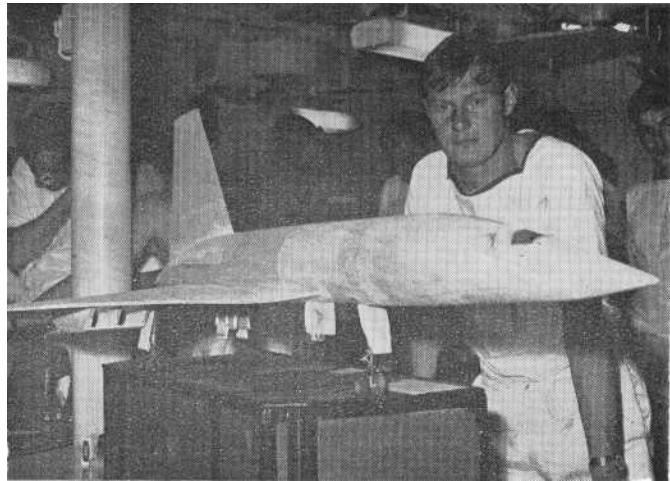
for Bario

HOBBIES



L.A.M. Beagley
with his butterflies

N.A. Blackman
builds his Concord



L.M.(E) Sillivan
wishes he were home.

V. I. P's



Sir Nigel Henderson, K.C.B., O.B.E,
C.-in-C. Plymouth



COMAF
Commodore A. L. Lloyd, D.S.C.



Admiral Takahashi



Dr. Goh Keng Swee,
Singapore Minister of Defence.



Kenya Minister
Mr. Tom Mboya and party.

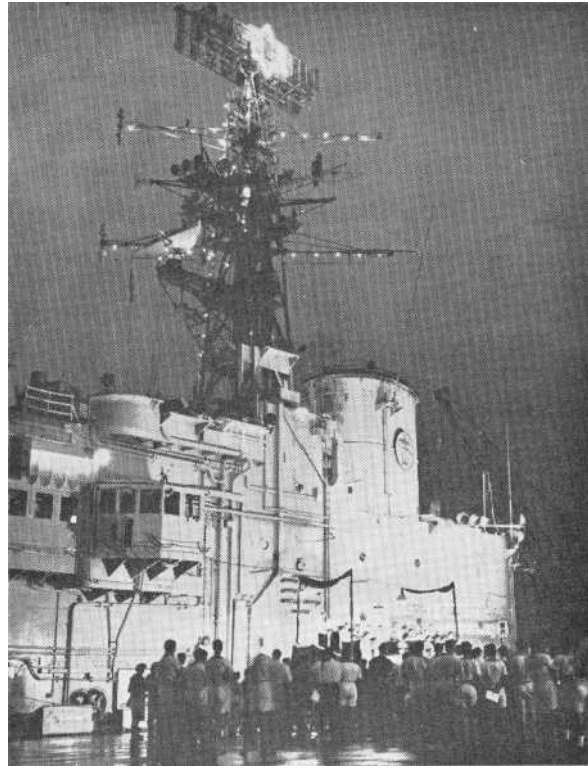


The Hon. Dato Temmenggong Jugah,
Federal Minister for Sarawak Affairs,
Paramount Chief of the Ibans.



The Penghulu of
the Kelabits
(Ascot?)

CHRISTMAS 1965



Carols on the Flight Deck
(with Pusser's Christmas tree)



J. R. O. Williams (Captain of the day)
on the L.E.P's mess deck.

VISITORS



Neptune and his court,
crossing the Line.



The Public at Kobe.



42 Commando's YOGI



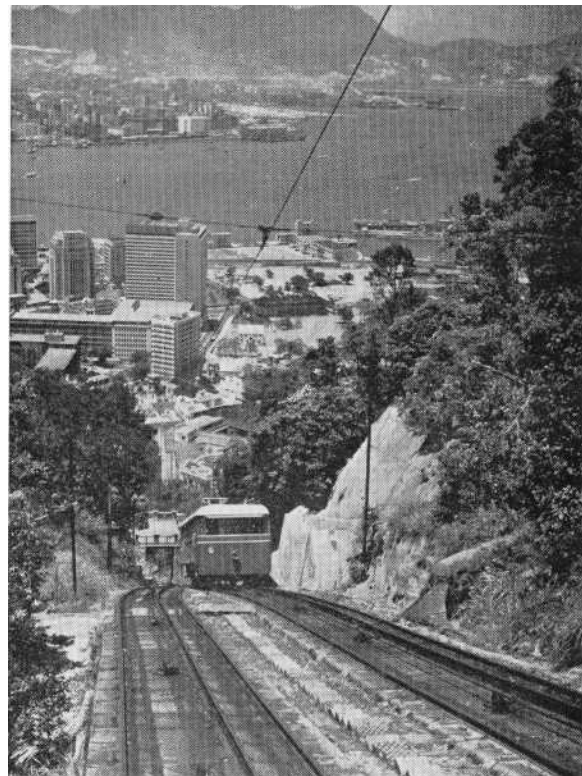
Tracker dogs,
Borneo

HONG KONG



Aberdeen
shops and houses

The Peak Tram
with
Kowloon viewed from the Peak





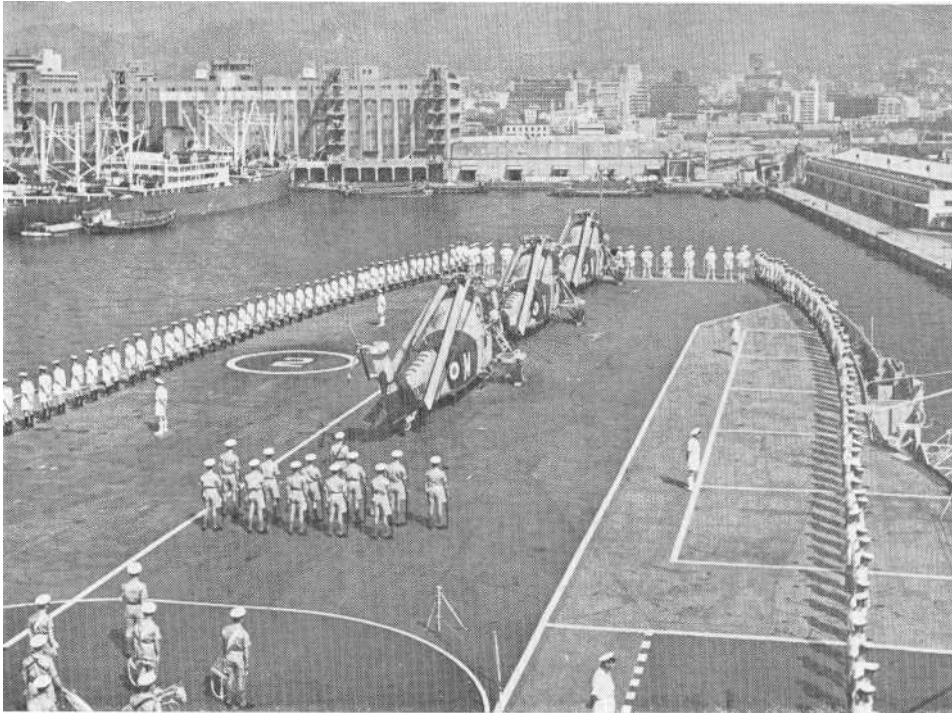
848's first arrivals

848's HANK the YANK
Capt. D. P. Hansen U.S.M.C.
receives his Presidential Citation.



Rear Admiral Adams
"Seen off" by Jenny and Albion.

JAPAN
KOBE



Morning - Ceremonial Arrival



Evening - Ceremonial Reception

Hong Kong night scene



Sight-seeing Tours in Japan



Naval Whites
Japanese blues



Japanese cameras at home.

OPERATIONAL



Dawn patrol



Tideflow fuels Albion, Brighton and Barrosa (astern) simultaneously



Assault Stations.



Commando on their way ashore.



Rotor Running Refuel.

We can't expect them to walk



C.P.O. Martin
direct the lift
of a 105 mm.



Water for the thirsty
-we have supplied
Champagne too!

OUR SQUADRON

848 Naval Air Commando Squadron

They laughed when Orville Wright said he wanted to fly. When he succeeded rumours were put about that he had been wearing a gas-filled waistcoat and pedalled with his feet. It is in that fine tradition of confounding the scoffers that 848 Squadron has achieved a massive and continuous defiance of the law of gravity for the last eighteen months.

Many of the pilots who flew onto ALBION in March 1965 made it look as though it was their first deck landing. It was! Who would have guessed that what, in March 1965, was largely a bunch of pale novices fresh from Culdrose would have become a well-co-ordinated team of lean leathery veterans by September 1966? Nobody. And how right they would have been, for as a result of the trickle draft-ing system the squadron is still largely a bunch of pale novices fresh from Culdrose.

But if much of the personnel has changed, the spirit of the squadron has not. It remains one of supreme flexibility, dash and sheer bafflement. Much of the credit for the smooth running of such a widely dispersed organisation must go to the flight system. Apart from the disadvantage of breeding Senior Pilots like rabbits, it has enabled the squadron to cope with simultaneous detachments as far apart as Aden and Borneo. The fierce flight loyalties of the early days have been largely overcome by a deliberate ecumenical movement coupled with some bewildering flight reshuffles.

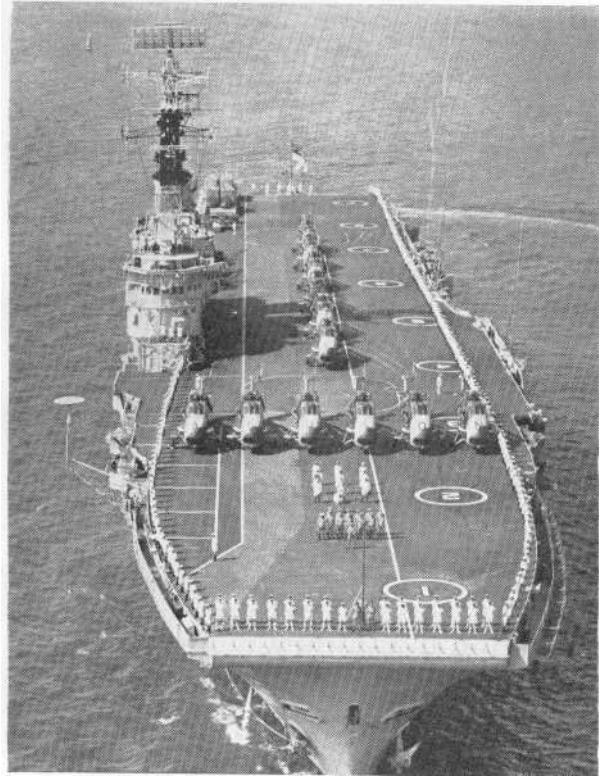
The Embarked Squadron

Although the brunt of the operational task was borne by the Aden, Sibuluan, Nanga Gaat, Labuan and Bario detachments, the flying from the ship has made up in variety what it lacked in teeth. We generally signalled our departure from each port of call with a formation flypast. These were no ordinary nine aircraft formations, but the much more sophisticated and daring manoeuvre known as the nine aircraft formation in which each of the nine pilots has a monumental hangover. The largest formation of all (eighteen Wessex and two Whirlwinds) was wisely used to mark an arrival rather than a departure; in this case the arrival of the squadron at Labuan. Seen as a massive vindication of "Flexible Servicing", it was in fact a reflection of enormous industry on the part of the maintenance crews, and perhaps neglect on the part of the pilots who tend to forget to put things in the 700.

If the object of a formation is to get as many aircraft into as small a space as possible, the opposite extreme is represented by the roulement, in which the aircraft get spread over as wide a stretch of countryside as possible, preferably on different frequencies and at maximum all up weight. Roulements have now become very much a routine part of the job, Royal Marine bears and all.

We have also participated in several exercises, from Aden (where we did a private assault exercise with 42 Commando) to the China Sea. Our "jointest" exercise was "Lions Roar" up on the north east coast of Malava where we sent a detachment of aircraft to co-operate with the R.A.F. Living in conditions of unbelievable squalor under canvas, we became more than ever convinced that the Army life was not for us. The most hair raising exercise was "Flying Foot" which included a night withdrawal of troops from ashore.

Although it is in roulements and exercises that we reach our most feverish level of activity, the great bulk of bread and butter flying on the ship has been continuation training. The detachments ashore, heavily committed, and with a limited ration of hours, have no opportunity for such things as night flying, instrument flying, formation and netting. While flights have been embarked they have been able to catch up on all these things. In fact by a shrewd economy we have sometimes been able to catch up on several at once, for example doing night formation in conditions of actual instrument flying. Do you wonder we have grey hairs?



The Wessex 5 "on Parade".

Even if he spends the vast majority of his time flying, and mentally preparing himself for flight, the most dedicated work-hog must squeeze in the odd bit of relaxation. Nor is it enough just to climb to two feet and level out in the afternoon. One needs a complete change from the nerve racking pace of life on the ship. This was provided by our numerous disembarkations to the mosquito bitten luxury of R.N.A.S. Sembawang, where a tropical routine contrived to make everything move pretty slowly, and the only flash of activity was signalled by the daily arrival of the Magnolia man. Working out of a 1948 Bedford van, he has been doing the job for fifteen years and can produce a substitute breakfast quicker than the eye. Even Sembawang isn't everything as a holiday camp, and this commission has seen the inception of the scheme by which aircrew (to understandable mutterings from the rest of the ship's company) are sent back to U.K. for recuperative leave. They arrive back looking pale and shaken by their exertions.

But the most interesting moments of our embarked time have undoubtedly been our visits to foreign ports. Some places such as Mombasa, Hong Kong and Kobe stagger by the sheer variety and intensity of the entertainments available. Others, such as Djibouti and Assab did not quite fall into the fleshpot class. But whether it is Gibraltar, the Radfan mountains, the Mombasa game park or the Seychelles, there is no doubt that the best way to see a place is from the air. We have done so. Thank you, Orville Wright.

What the Squadron did and where it lived in Sarawak during the Ship's commission

Shortly after HMS ALBION arrived in Singapore in April 1965, the first of the squadron's personnel and aircraft went ashore into Sarawak to relieve 845 Squadron. Since then everyone in the squadron has experienced living in a tin or bamboo roofed hut for at least three months. Some have even had three spells ashore!

On arriving in Sarawak we took over 845's main base at Sibul airfield. Sibul is one of the few towns of Sarawak. It sits on the north bank of the River Rajang where it is about five times as wide as the Thames at London Bridge. Life at Sibul, though hot and dusty, was very much like life at home. There were roads, which didn't go anywhere but just petered out in the jungle a few miles out of town, there were cars, telephones, a cinema and even a swimming pool.

Leaving Sibul, one could travel for two days by longboat up the River Rajang and then the Baleh until one eventually reached Nanga Gaat. Alternatively the journey would take just one hour in a helicopter.

Nanga Gaat in English means "the mouth of the River Gaat" which is just what it was. A tongue of land at the junction of two rivers, the Gaat and the Baleh into which it ran. Even here, over 100 miles inland the river was wider than the Thames at Teddington, and furthermore, it could rise 60 feet overnight when it flooded.

To this small piece of land, surrounded by jungle, everything had to come by helicopter, parachute or up the river in one of our five longboats with the White Ensign fluttering astern. The longboats were to us what a Mini might be at home. In them we collected our food and laundry from the nearest town (4 hours away). When paying a social call on our neighbours, the Ibans, the longboat was used. We lived in *Bashas*, built on stilts of split bamboo and attap leaves, and very cool and comfortable they were. The a/c were kept in the open on small levelled sites which had a fence round to keep the local headman's bulls from walking into them in the night!



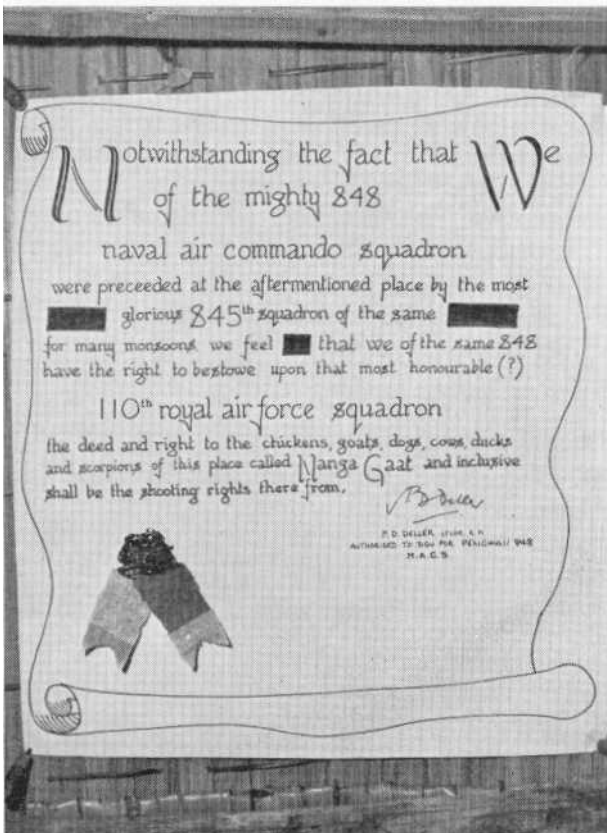
Nanga Gaat



"Bull pens?"

In the mornings the aircraft would take off and be away for most of the day moving soldiers from one place to another without seeing a single road or house. Just a green carpet of trees interspersed with rivers.

In the evenings one might visit a longhouse to talk with the old men and eat wild pig and drink their rice wine, this could go on well into the night before one was allowed to sleep. The journey down river through the rapids the following morning was quite enough to wake the sleepest of persons!

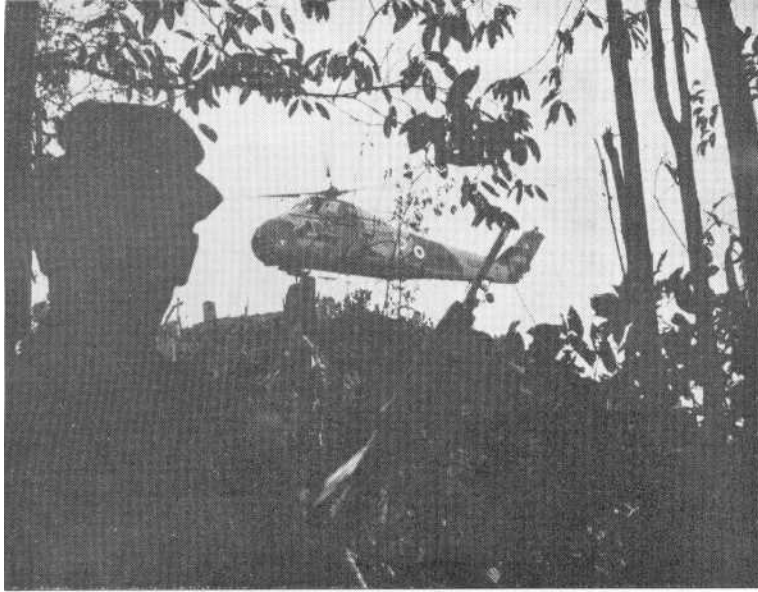


Cinema shows in the evening used to be fun too, often the audience could be more entertaining than the film. Long haired gentle men with gold teeth flashing and tattooed limbs staring in amazement at the picture flickering across the screen. On one occasion we were even lucky enough to have Frankie Howard and Shirley Abicair visit us for an impromptu chat. To many Ibans she was the first white women they had ever seen.

Regrettably our stay with the Ibans came to an end all too soon. In September we handed over Sibu and Nanga Gaat to the R.A.F., and so the Navy said goodbye to the Anchor Inn for the last time.

After returning to HMS ALBION we sailed for Labuan, an island off the north east coast of Sarawak, next door to Brunei. Two days later we flew ashore to R.A.F. Labuan and set up our main base. Meanwhile others went forward to Bario to settle into our forward base.

Labuan was much the same as Sibu, but the journey to Bario was completely different. The distance was about 100 miles, but one had to cross range upon range of jungle clad mountains before at last reaching Bairo sitting in a broad open valley at 3,000 ft. with 7,000 ft. mountains encircling it on three sides. At Bario, there



Is this where I catch a No. 11 Bus?

was a grass landing airstrip, which was the sole means of exit to the outside world, unless we were prepared to walk, for about 6 months!

At Bario we lived with the Gurkhas and Gordon Highlanders and it was our daily task to fly them wherever they wanted to go. Our local neighbours were the Kelabits. Like the Ibans they too lived in longhouses, and made their living by tending the rice paddy fields in the valley. They also had a sawmill, which we helped to maintain for them. With it they had built a fine new longhouse, school and dispensary. Some of the schoolchildren were boarders, coming from longhouses 30 or 40 miles away - there's no 4 o'clock bus home!



"Bario"

"Bario"



"Longhouse Surgery"

We will all remember Bario for different reasons; the day the beer ration dropped from the back of a Beverly without the parachute opening; MIMET and FRED the squadron's two monkeys; compo rations and the day the fresh eggs and bread didn't arrive; the Christmas pantomime "Puss in Jungle Boots"; the Carol Service in the longhouse with all the children watching; the fact that the evenings were cool enough for a sweater, and a blanket at night was a must; but perhaps most of all it will be because (and this applies to all the squadron detachments in Sarawak) it has been so intensely interesting, varied and worthwhile and quite unlike anything else one can expect in the Navy.



Troops unloading - upcountry



Girls unloading - Bario

(By the time we reach Portsmouth the Squadron will have flown 5,000 hrs., 12,000 men and 5,000,000 pounds of freight in Sarawak).

The Aden Detachment

Aden in May 1965 has all the appearance of a town without the law; in which terrorists careered down the main street in cars or stalked the downtown shopping area in pairs. But look again. The desperate men clinging to the running boards of a strange vehicle streaking down the Maala straight are not a getaway gang on the run; they are pilots returning from a run ashore. And those scarred thugs darting from door to door, their eyes swivelling like ball bearings are as likely as not a couple of petty officers trying to beat down the going price for coffee percolators.

Yes, the "A flight" detachment of 848 squadron was in town, and badmen from Dhala to Sheikh Othman blanched at the news.

Our dark green two horsepower Citroen may have looked a bit shabby alongside the shiny Alfas at R.A.F. Khormaksar, but for getting around some of the hottest, dryest and most inhospitable terrain in the world, our fifteen seat three wheelers were just the job.

Even the available relaxation had its little thrills. As you walked down the street to the beach it was easy to convince yourself that every Arab you passed was about to take a short run and lob a bomb down the back of your neck. And when you made it to the sea there was this net fifty yards out with you on one side, the sharks the other, and a lot of holes in between.

All in all we enjoyed our time, but these things leave their mark. If you see a member of the squadron with a deep tan, shoes full of sand, and eyes in the back of his head, you are looking at a member of A flight.

THE AIR DEPARTMENT

The Air Department has the most varied assortment of jobs done by any department in the ship. Some of their work is described in these paragraphs.

This commission started, for the Air Department, on 19th November 1964 when Captain Adams and Commander Halliday jointly made the first helicopter landing on board. By now (June 1966), the total number of landings has passed the 7,000 mark while the number of take-offs is exactly twelve - hence the aircraft in the hangar.

In all this time the Meteorological staff of ALBION have made thousands of "reset" observations, and issued hundreds of forecasts. It is believed that some of the forecasts actually came true.

The Flight Deck team, with their fire-suit men, fire-fighters, tractor and crane drivers, etc., have all done a magnificent job. No one regrets that all their rescuing and fire-fighting has only been 'for exercise'. One tractor driver did try to work out the mileage covered by our tractors while towing aircraft. He now looks very despondent and goes around muttering about the Monte Carlo Rally.

Unfortunately no one has worked out the number of times the cranes have been used but we do know that over 250 tons of stores have been lifted by helicopter to or from the flight deck in the shape of external loads. About 50 tons of this total was done at night.

Our very active Photographic Section (whose work is described in detail elsewhere in this book) has used over 6,000 yards of film and a strip of paper 6 inches wide and 32 miles long to produce photographs of all the interesting happenings in and around ALBION.



"Trust Us"

The Safety Equipment section, whose motto is, "If it doesn't work when you need it, we replace it free", has enough assault life jackets to give everyone on board a spare life-jacket. Everyone of these has to be tested and inspected at the end of each roulement. In their spare time the Section also has to keep the aircrew safety equipment serviceable.

Hundreds of aircrew briefings have been given - perhaps even a few have been heard. Only when the ship's position was described as "5392 miles from Culdrose" did the audience show any interest.

All in all, a hardworking bunch the Air Department, even though their main aim appears to stop cinema, volley-ball or deck hockey whenever possible.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SECTION

It has been a busy commission for the Photographic Section. Every activity has been covered and approximately 27,000 prints have been produced. At times the section has been stretched to the limit, even the Photographic Officer has been seen with a camera in hand.

Although busy as previously mentioned, the commission has had its rewards. P.O. ROBINSON "walked" away with the PEREGRINE TROPHY, having awards in six out of the seven classes. He also won the Open Competition in the Black and White section. Rear Admiral ADAMS won the colour section, thereby making it an all ALBION effort.

Early on in the commission a film unit visited the ship to produce a training film for the military. This film demonstrates the routine of an assault from the messdecks, along the routes to the hangar and right to the door of the helicopter.

Publicity has been a major project from the word "go". Reporters from the B.B.C. and I.T.V., the national papers and the provincials have visited the ship at some



"P.O. ROBINSON receives the PEREGRINE TROPHY"



stage or another. Vernons, the Naval publicity agents, came out to the Far East and also a few free-lance photographers.

The material produced by the section was soon in heavy demand. Requirements came from the 1965 Boat show, Westlands, the Fleet Air Arm Museum, Bristol Siddeleys, Army Recruiting, the Joint Welfare Establishment, Dartmouth and many others too numerous to mention here.

I.D. photographs, passports, V.I.P.s., roulements, assault exercises, defects, copying, carol service, the mast by day and night, ship's concert, "local boys", presents, recces, landing sites, the Nuffield Trust equipment in use, sport - you name it, we've photographed it. Some of the requirements are best illustrated by the accompanying photograph.

P.O. Robinson has proved himself a winner, not only in photography but also in his sailing activities. Several of his sailing opponents have spent the commission trying to beat him and are well satisfied if they have managed it once. A full report appears in the Sailing section.

Everything in this ship is wanted yesterday.



FIXING WING AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS

In addition to all our normal helicopter flying, we have sometimes pretended to be a fixed wing carrier. By May 1966 we had seen more than 70 landings by Army Air Corps Austers and Beavers and Royal Air Force Single Pioneers- "Just like the good old days" said Lieut Cdr (F).

With no arrestor wires or barriers we are limited to the numbers that can be landed at any one time. Austers can be struck down into the Hangar, but Beavers and Pioneers must remain on deck and achieving a clear deck is a problem.

209 Squadron Royal Air Force with their Pioneers were our most frequent visitors when we ferried their aircraft to and from Borneo. On 28th August 1965, the Commanding Officer of 209 made his squadron's 100th Deck landing. To commemorate this occasion suitable presentations and expressions of good will were made on the Flight Deck.

Beaver landing on with a Pioneer in Fly 1.



Expressions of Goodwill!



"Take over bid?"

HOVERCRAFT

Next day 209's 100th Take Off was made by a suitably marked aircraft.

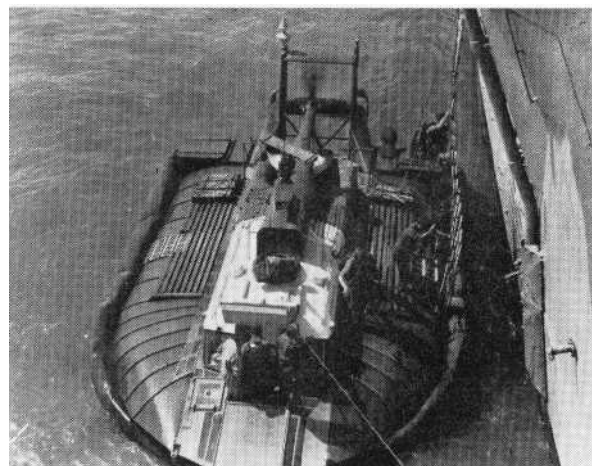
Hovercraft have an obvious potential in amphibious operations and we have been fortunate in carrying out limited trials with one of these craft, an SRN 5, off Borneo.

There seemed to be no problems in embarking troops and small quantities of stores while at anchor and all of us who talked our way into a ride were most impressed.

More extensive trials were eventually cancelled but we did at least see this new form of transport and did perhaps help develop future amphibious techniques.



SRN 5 at Speed.



R.M's embarking alongside.

~~METROLOGY~~

MET. DEPARTMENT!!

~~MEETEOROLOGY~~

In this age of emergent nations and struggling nationalistic minorities it is not unusual to hear of small, well trained, highly organised groups of dedicated men spreading havoc and destruction in the community and striking at the very heart of constituted authority.

This is the story of one such group - the ship's Meteorological Department.

If it has done nothing else, this commission has exposed the weather men for what they are; not, as many think, a shower of short-sighted crystal grazers but a society of highly skilled and professional "rotters up".

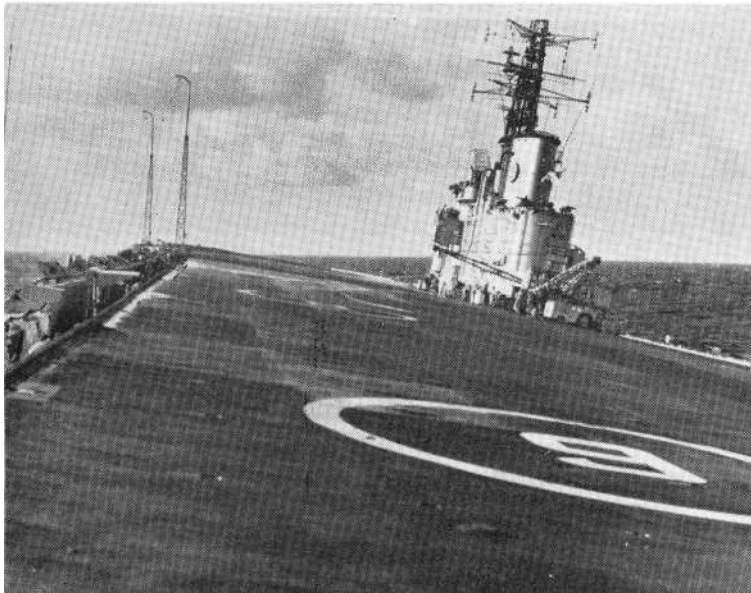
We all know the allegedly funny story about forecasters always being wrong but what is not common knowledge is that they do it on purpose just to mislead and confuse the customers. Questionable forecasts are only a small part of the Met. Department's stock in trade however, as we on board ALBION have found out to our cost during the past eighteen months.

Looking back it seems probable that it all started during the work-up although at that time no one suspected that the particularly boisterous weather that we were blessed with at that time was anything other than a prelude to just another English winter. However as we lurched up and down the Portland exercise areas for five days in a vain bid to find a place where the wind was less than gale force we might have been forgiven for suspecting that we were the victims of some diabolical conspiracy.

And on that glorious Sunday morning when the anemometer at Portland Bill registered 100 knots and then broke off and the wind over the flight deck was 30 knots - down wind, it should have occurred to someone to take a closer look at that seemingly innocent team in the Met. Office.

However no one did; the weather was added to the list of "things wrong with the work-up" and blanket blame was attached to the Staff.

Based on a disarmingly optimistic appreciation of Mediterranean weather a decision was made to complete the work-up at Gibraltar and as we slithered and slid across the deck as the ship rolled to 27 degrees one day off Finisterre no one doubted that the decision was a right one. But of course Gibraltar was just the same.



Sea slight - swell negligible.

abate and missing our canal date by twenty-four hours, we realised that we were not out of the wood yet.

We spent our time there threatened by the door men at the Casino on the one hand and some undisciplined Atlantic weather on the other, and almost upsetting the balance of power in southwest Europe by finding ourselves with a strong detachment of garrison troops on board which we were unable to return to their front-line positions in Main Street owing to the cross winds at North Front.

There seemed to be a lull after Gibraltar for quite unexpectedly we hit a fine spell and we returned to Portsmouth in brilliant sunshine and eventually sailed for the Far East in much the same conditions.

However, unbeknown to us, the subversive elements in 1K were actively planning their next coup and as we lay weather bound off Port Said waiting for the wind to

It is difficult to imagine that it is possible to "rot up" the weather at Aden where it is considered as predictable as the inhabitants are anti-social; however, it was left to the Met. Department to show how easy the impossible can be achieved. After being rained on going into Aden I suppose we half expected to find the wind at Ras el Ara to be blowing in exactly the opposite direction to which all records and needles to say forecasts said it would and so almost stopping exercise Jebel jumper before it started.

Crossing the Indian Ocean we spent three nostalgic days dreaming of home watching the driving rain lash the ship from end to end and listening to the siren mournfully announcing that we couldn't see where we were going.

It was probably at this time that we began to suspect that our team of weather experts were something more than incompetent, however with an early visit to Hong Kong in the offing everyone was prepared to forgive and forget, everyone that is, but THEM.

Our brief visit to Hong Kong in the capacity of Flag Ship was curtailed in indecent haste during COMFEF's official cocktail party when it was reported that BABE, a distinctly out of season typhoon, was heading in our direction.

As we reeled our way out of harbour that night, two days before time, we marvelled at the lack of tact of those who chose to rot up the Fleet Commander, and when on the following day it was discovered that typhoon BABE was nothing more than an exhausted tropical depression that was likely to miss Hong Kong by at least 150 miles it was clearly the time for action.

And what more suitable head to roll than that of the Meteorological Officer himself. On the 29th June he was deported to a small penal settlement in the depths of the Borneo jungle where it was hoped that either the leeches or the *tuak* would get him.

Meanwhile back at the ship his two able henchmen Paddy "trout and salmon" WOODSIDE and Marc "blue" GILLETT' fished and ten-pin bowled their way through the Self Maintenance period awaiting their leader's return.

Following the publication of an inflammatory document called "A weather report from Nanga Gaat" which was thought to be contrary to the spirit of the "hearts and minds" campaign, the Met. Officer was returned to the ship.

It appeared that the jungle had had a chastening effect on MET.O for there followed a quiet period during which nothing of any particular significance happened in the weather world. True, Bessie, on her first ever outing, was savaged on the beach in Jason's Bay by a sadistic squall that blew up in the middle of the Captain's lunch party, but then that could happen to any girl.

Even the trip to the Middle East and back in the Autumn was comparatively uneventful despite the fact that an eminent actor and playwright cut short his visit to the Seychelles at the time the ship was in the vicinity, complaining that it had not stopped raining since he had arrived there.

It was at that stage of the commission that a subtle change took place, the true significance of which probably escaped the notice of most of us.

All the best organisations have their "Mr. Bigs", ruthless, influential, enigmatic men, often prominent and respected citizens, who, turn to a life of crime because it's there.

The Senior Instructor Officer, using the teaching profession as a front and operating from a well furnished bed-sitter in 4U cabin flat, has often been suspected of being the brains behind the weather conspiracy although it has always been difficult to prove this. When there was a change of SIO in Mombasa it was not at first clear what effect this would have on the weather. After a week-end in Assab it looked as though the new regime was likely to be as menacing as the old. For two days the ship lay on a dead lee shore under the shadow of a collision and grounding report, while strong onshore winds, undoubtedly the work of dissident tribesmen in the Radfan, lashed the sea into a fury and drenched all the libertymen out for their 2/2d worth ashore.

However in the weeks that followed it occurred to many that they had been a little hasty in their judgement of the new regime because there was a notable lack of subversive activity by the Met. Department and it was even reported that some accurate and reliable forecasts had been produced during this period.

Over Christmas hopes ran very high for a complete end to weather confrontation particularly as the rain stopped - as predicted - minutes before the beginning of the carol service on the flight deck.

Nevertheless the scars of bitter experience are not always quick to heal and so it was not surprising to hear the last Captain remark as he left the ship in Hong Kong "I'm not happy about going home before the end of the commission but at least the weather's better there".

Captain Place might have been forgiven for thinking that his predecessor exaggerated but when he was compelled to make his first approach to Singapore Naval Base in torrential rain and zero visibility, he had very good cause to revise his opinion.

At the end of February the ship went into dry dock and the Met. Department's season came to an end. For men whose livelihoods depend on their ability to outwit and outpace their opponents, training and exercise are essential at all times and particularly so when the "season" is over.

With their activities suspended on board the weather men cast around for pastures new in order to keep their hands in. "Blue" Gillett took up sailing and must be held partly responsible for some terrifying thunderstorms during the latter part of the regatta season. "Paddy" Woodside concentrated on golf and fishing and it is considered no coincidence that around that time a Naval Officer was struck by lightning while playing the fifth hole at the Island Club.

Met. O's activities centered round the language wing in Nee Soon barracks where he succeeded in dealing a blow to the Malaysian National Language campaign from which it is unlikely to recover.

And all the time the Boss himself, ably supported by his wife, maintained a firm grip on the situation from the middle of Terror Swimming Pool.

With the docking over and the end of the commission very much in view it was to be expected that caution and discretion might be the first victims in the run-down; and so it was that plans were made for the ship to visit Kobe at the beginning of the typhoon season.

With our defences down and vigilance relaxed we sailed for Japan on the 11th of May, on the same day that typhoon, IRMA was discovered within striking distance of the east coast of Mindanao. For a day or so our fate hung delicately in the balance but it became evident in time that IRMA was in no hurry and that we were and we sprinted into Kobe while she was still thrashing around in the Philippines.

During our visit however, thanks to IRMA and no doubt the Met. Department, Kobe enjoyed two days of some of the heaviest rain on record for May. However apart from the rain the outcome of Operation IRMA suggested that at last the weather man had met their match and some observers were even confidently predicting that the reign of terror was over, but they did not take into account typhoon JUDY. On the way back from Japan we discovered that by some strange coincidence JUDY was aiming to pass north of Luzon at much the same time as we were and there was very little consolation to be gained from the fact that she was going the other way.

With a bold and defiant gesture the programme was changed - not for the first time in the commission - and we went around the Philippines the other way and so succeeded in outwitting the Met. men yet again.

I'm sure they are getting desperate now; two failures in quick succession must be a very bitter pill to swallow and with the end of the commission only a matter of weeks away we really must expect something big.

But then as we are going to Hong Kong in July in the middle of the typhoon season so we are likely to get it. However that's only a forecast and we all know how reliable they are.

AIR ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

When the A.E.D. Advance Party joined the ship at Portsmouth in April/May 1964 their predecessors were able to assure them that the chaos had, in fact, once been a working Commando Ship. By the time the Main Party joined in October, all were beginning to wonder if it ever would be again.

The six months between, and most of the following six months, were spent in trying to ensure that we could "provide engineering, workshop, inspection and advisory support for any squadron - and in particular 848 Squadron". Since the squadron was almost the only source of practical information on the Wessex 5, frequent visits to and from Culdrose were necessary and a good liaison was soon established.

By late 1964, some semblance of order had been restored to the ship, the junior Rates had painted the acres of departmental bulkheads for the first time, and sufficient equipment started trickling back from the Dockyard and Stores Depots to give hope for the future. As the sailing date approached, the trickle became a flood, and we sailed with a bonus of six F.I.R. Wessex, a part interest in two Sioux, and a miscellany of ground equipment and air conditioned portable workshops which, it was claimed, would put jungle warfare in the Butlin's Holiday Camp category. (This claim was subsequently confirmed by the regular disappearance of the ship's A.E.O.'s into the jungle).

Once clear of the Channel, the department soon got together to have a successful commission both in the technical and not-so-technical fields. The comment of the A/A.E.O. when the first Single Pioneer landed on and the Duty Crew set to work, are unprintable, as are his opinions of the first "Boy Scouts" attempts to get up a Forward Air Base, but all survived and he has been known to smile since. Similarly it took time to become accustomed to the fact that the Air Ordnance Workshop was the S.R.E.

headquarters and the Aircraft Workshop, the Concert Party rehearsal room - but gun cleanings and weldings were also done occasionally.

The Junior Rates, who did most of their training with scrubbers and paint brushes, kept the messes well up in the credit winning lists, held the Blood Cup longer than any other, and produced their quota of winners in the athletic, boxing, swimming and sailing events.

Seagoing in the F.A.A. tends to be regarded as a necessary interruption to R.A. time, but all members of the 1964-1966 A.E.D. will remember the present commission as a pleasant interruption and they themselves can claim no small credit for making it so.



Workshop support.

THE CHIPPIES

It has been said that Shipwrights should be "Jacks of all trades and masters of most"; it has certainly been true of this commission, whether it has been shoring the stem off Siburo or building Bashes at Barrio; resiting the saluting guns overnight or a mock up of a helicopter outrigger; planned maintenance or panic boat repairs; ventilation or sanitation; all of this plus 1001 other odd jobs have been part of our day's work.

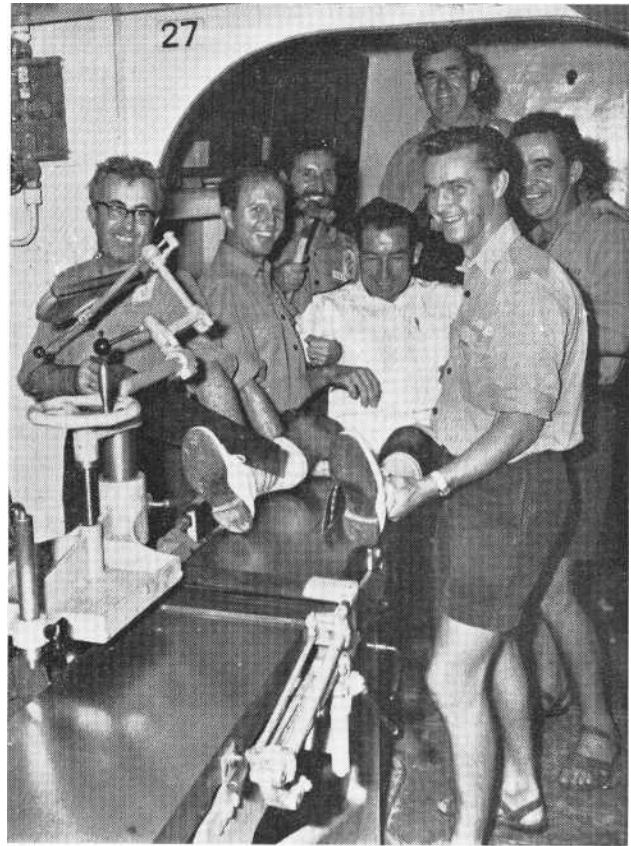
When we left Portsmouth there was a large pile of job cards in the "in" tray, and despite the combined efforts of Singapore and Hong Kong Dockyards, the Fleet Maintenance Unit and ourselves, you have contrived to ensure that this pile never diminishes. In dealing with so many cards it has been inevitable that some have had to wait a considerable time before receiving attention; for your patience in this matter, and for ensuring that we have had full employment for the past 18 months we thank you.

Looking back on this commission it is difficult to single out highlights, there has been a lot of hard work but most of it has been enjoyable and interesting. Like other technical departments we do not see much of the glamour and limelight which occasionally exists on the "roof garden", however we like to feel that we have done our bit towards keeping ALBION going, and have even succeeded in improving her to a small degree.

We have had our amusing incidents. Who will ever forget the look on the Chief Shipwright's face when told to make a sledge for the Royal Marines to transport water ashore - we were off Borneo and the temperature was in the eighties. Or the look on his "face" when a rather large tracker dog removed a lump from his shorts whilst he was checking the timber rack on the foc'sle.

On the sporting side, Chippies have represented the ship at Rugby, Soccer, Hockey, Cricket and Sailing. We are too small a department to run our own inter-part teams but have been well represented in the various Chief and Petty Officers' Mess teams.

Now the commission is drawing to a close we all look forward to our return home to our wives and families, and to the inevitable pile of "domestic job cards" which will have arisen in our absence, It has been a long commission, for many of us our last, and we shall take away with us many pleasant memories of our time in ALBION.



Do not use this machine without a guard.

CHURCH NOTES



The first victim of the SRE programme "Personal Choice" was inevitably the Chaplain. If I had known what I was in for I might not so readily have accepted the invitation to undergo the Question-master's shrewd interrogation. My only comfort was that for me it was all over and that for the rest of the commission I could sit back and enjoy listening to the other victims. One question remains in my memory-- "What would you do if you were made Chaplain of the Fleet tomorrow?" That brought me up with a round turn, but my reply went like this; "What every Chaplain of the Fleet (indeed, what every Chaplain)

does." This means demonstrating that the Church is not a closed shop for an eccentric few, but that it is the spearhead of an attack, mounted by saints and sinners alike, "against sin, the world and the devil", the members of which can draw on God's strength to help them and, in doing so, draw nearer to God himself.

How far this has been achieved in ALBION is not for me to say. The worship of the Church has been maintained by a small but increasing number of faithful and I believe that the effect of their example on the lives of those around them has been great. "A man is justified before God by what he does as well as by what he believes" (from Saint James' letter in the New Testament) and there has been abundant evidence of such "justifications" in ALBION in the past eighteen months. At the same time we have had opportunities of seeing the Church in action in ways which we might never have dreamed of; most spectacular of all is the work of the Church in Hong Kong where schools, orphanages, hospitals and clinics, feeding centres and a leper colony all sponsored by the Church, were visited, and where Churches cannot be built quickly enough to accommodate the many people who are drawn to the worship of God by what they see Christians *doing*. At the other end of the scale have been visits to Christian communities in the most remote parts of the *ulu*, where the Church building has been at *attap basher* and the Parish Priest only one generation away from his ancestral headhunters.

We are fortunate in having such a fine Church in ALBION. Here day by day, the one Service instituted and commanded by Our Lord, the Holy Communion, has been celebrated. The number of Communicants has gradually grown and three members of the ship's company have received the gift of Confirmation at the hands of the Bishop of Singapore, while others are preparing for it on return to the U.K.

For any success in my ministry in ALBION I thank God - and you for your encouragement; for any failure I ask His - and your - forgiveness.

Most of you have a copy of the Authorised Version of the Bible at home, even if it is a little dusty. I leave you all, even the "four wheelers" with the words of Saint Paul which you will find in his letter to the Philippians, in the third verse of chapter one; look them up - I really mean them.

DENTAL DEPARTMENT

About the centre of the ship on the starboard side down a long dark passage appropriately opposite the Chapel is to be found a small bright but warm compartment - the Dental Surgery. On the door might well as the following introduction to the services offered within:



"Surgeon Lieut (D) M. J. Swann - ably assisted by POMA Ted Cooper - who has practised in the principal cities and ports of Ireland, England, South Arabia, Kenya, Japan, etc., etc., offers his assistance to the Officers and Men of HMS ALBION. He professes an infallible secret for cleaning teeth which renders them white as alabaster although before as black as jet, likewise fastens the teeth and makes the gums hard by means of a salutary liquid, which also preserves teeth from rotting and removes that dreaded fear of all sea-going men - scurvy. The toothache can be cured without drawing the teeth. He put in artificial teeth which appear like natural ones".

Powdered human tooth is considered a potent aphrodisiac by most Oriental peoples and brings a high price in some Far Eastern markets. This might explain why one of the five dental surgery assistants employed during the commission has decided not to sign on, instead retiring to England on the proceeds of the above trade.

Apart from POMA Cooper who is new employed in the dental surgery, the following have helped the dental officer provide a complete dental service to the ship's company and the many embarked Army and R.A.F. personnel treated onboard:- POMA Hyatt, LMA Jobson, LMA Wyatt and MA Allen (on loan from HMS SIMBANG).

Tell me if this hurts.

EDUCATION BRANCH

The commission started with Inst. Cdr. Finch holding the fort on his own. The dockyard mateys were in possession of the schoolroom turning it into a mess for the L.E.P.s and we were evicted. We were offered the choice of the funnel uptakes - or nearly so - 2S/T Port Commando Mess Deck. The latter we accepted and with grateful thanks to our friends in Pompey managed to fix it up with boards, notice and black, so that it started to look like a schoolroom.

The remaining staff, Inst. Lt. Cdrs. Burrows and Lewis, joined in October just in time to go on Duty Free after the refit. We settled in, found our way around and prepared for the work up. Followed by our usual instructions.

We have had all the usual difficulties with classes: Ratings not being able to be spared etc., but we also had some special ones of our own. Like the time we lost the schoolroom for its original purpose as a Commando Mess Deck in Windy Weather. The Squadron also posed quite a problem with detachments ashore in Borneo and just when you look forward to an intensive time in Singapore over half your class disembarks to Simbang.

Still we have managed to present a few candidates for the various examinations, although most of the candidates have been after qualifications for going outside. Our problem here is trying to convince people that the sooner they start courses the easier it is for them and the more benefits they can obtain.

We never thought that the time would come when we would be grateful for the odd shape of the schoolroom but there was the time when the Met. Officer had a class at the forward end, S.I.O. was teaching midships and I.O.2 had a third class at the after end - all teaching different subjects! Babel!

A change in management occurred in November 1965, celebrated with a run in Mombasa. I don't think we learnt anything that time!! Much to his horror the boss inherited the Argus, but it has it uses. Remember the trips in Japan? All paid for by Pusser because they were part of the current affairs course run by Argus himself on the passage there.

We managed to press the Padre into service doing his old job of teaching Geography - hope he managed to learn some too this trip.

To all those leaving the service we wish "Sekmat Tinggal" and remember the resettlement officer in Cabin 4U 52.

MARINE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

For the Marine Engineering Department the commission started straight into the turmoil of a refit and as the summer wore on, (and what a summer that was - making us wish the air conditioning was still working) so the machinery spaces became less and less recognisable. A lot of hard work was done during the refit so that it was possible to carry out a basin trial on terminal date, almost unprecedented in a big ship. The vast majority of the watchkeepers during those first few weeks at sea were new to the ship and the retard party did a great deal to help us find our feet.

Quote

Commander passing Heads reducing valve being repaired
"Is that what made the lights go out Chief?"

The trials and work up passed uneventfully until two weeks before we were due to sail for the Far East when oil was found in two of the boilers. So we found ourselves inundated with several tons of chemicals and a lot of talk of caustic soda and citric acid but the work was completed in time. So to the east, the air conditioning plant was started up and we began to appreciate fully the worth of long hours of maintenance and inspections, carried out back in Portsmouth.

Quote

"Why are you smiling so much these days Chief?"
"I am going insane"

After our arrival in Singapore we looked up old friends and made many new friends in the dockyard and soon discovered what a good service they can provide. We also discovered what other services could be provided in the big city and across the Causeway.

Quote

"You know, it's a straight pipe with a great big bend in it".

During the next few months we settled down into a regular pattern of steaming and maintenance periods but not without the odd spot of excitement like ten feet of water in the forward gear room for example. It was not all work and one afternoon we took over Terror Sports ground and held an Engine Room sports meeting organised with his usual efficiency by Charles Samuel BEARD! We had one unique event, namely throwing the Sectional Wheel Spanner, won by POM(E) CLARKE with a throw of 45' 10.5" which is about as far as most of us can throw an ordinary wheel spanner. The prizes were given out by the Fleet Marine Engineer Officer, Commander DOUGLAS-MORRIS mainly to ERA OLD and LM(E) SULLIVAN, who seemed to win most of the events between them.

In July we were all very sorry to see Commander EDLESTON leave the ship in considerable pain from a slipped disc and the Senior Engineer took over as M.E.O. until the end of September when Commander DEANE Joined.

Quote

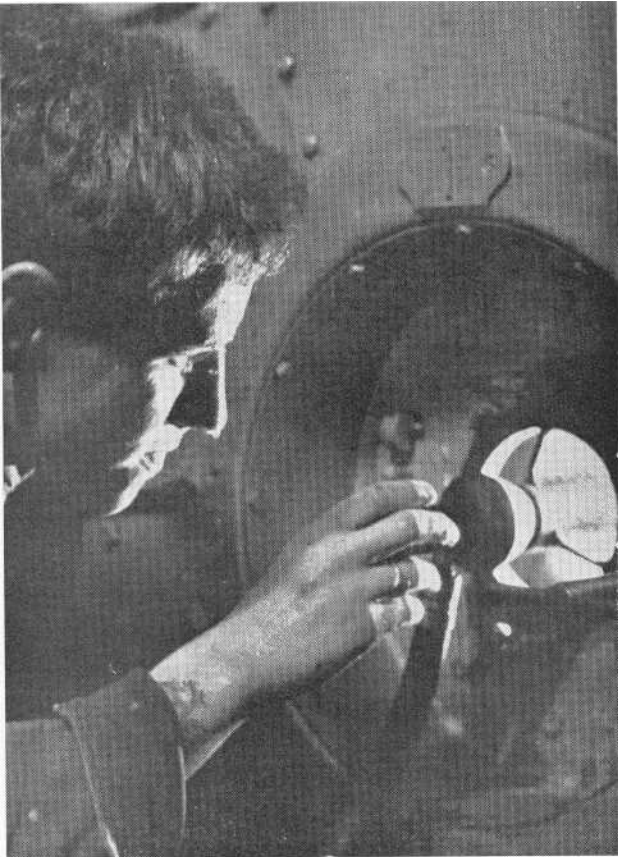
Gunnery Officer in Engineer's Office
 "Engineers are very good blokes"

When the time came to sail back across the Indian Ocean we were ready for it although it meant much hard work to achieve our earlier sailing date, cleaning boilers, fuelling, storing and carrying out machinery trials all in one day. At the end of that trip the day before entering Mombasa we carried out our biggest and fastest replenishment of the commission, embarking 1581 tons of fuel at a rate of 950 tons per hour.

Quote

Time 0800 OOW to MEOOW - "We will shortly be passing Ceylon"
 MEOOW to OOW - "What time?"
 OOW - "Wait one, I will check the chart" -
 Later "2000"

In Mombasa we engaged the services of a local ship repair firm to undertake a few refitting jobs for us and a considerable amount of painting for the ship. Most of the department took the opportunity for leave and of course visited Tsavo Game Park. The next few weeks were spent preparing for the inspection but the weekend cruises from Aden provided two unusual visits to Assab and Djibouti.



Sweating it out

On Boxing Day the Engineer Officers were taken on at Football (?) by the M (E)s, the Engineers are well known for their skill at shove-halfpenny, pitch and toss, and top of the Mandarin go! But they are not very good at playing football with a ping-pong ball which was one of the four types of balls used! The M(E)s showing great skill and dash won by one football, 2 rugger balls and a ping-pong ball type goals to a tennis ball type goal. At the end the teams showed their appreciation of the fine work done by the Ref (C.S.B. himself) by dumping him in the largest puddle that could be found. An early hour on New Year's Day found a band of watchkeepers sweating out the celebrations of the night before as we lit the boilers and raised steam bound for Hong Kong.

Quote

"We didn't put this little fire out with extinguishers, we suffocated it with bodies".

This was also a maintenance period and we took the opportunity of the Hong Kong winter to catch up on some work on the air conditioning, but the weather cheated us again, in a different way, and became so warm that we had to restart the plant earlier than planned.

In February our next land-mark in the commission and a time of great activity down below

was the docking period. A few days before arriving in Singapore we heard that we were to dock five days earlier than planned and the hundred and one things such as tank cleaning, defuelling, de-storing and not forgetting moving ashore, all had to be completed in a week, but we made it and ten hours after entering dock, the bottom was exposed for the first time in seventeen months.

Living ashore was a pleasant break and among many activities, sailing has grown in popularity in the branch, messing about with boats is now a favourite way of spending a few hours in the fresh air. Led by S/Lt PRODGER and well backed up by Lt. CARSLAKE we have done well in this sport. I often wonder why it has become so popular, maybe because the only "clouds" to worry out are those in the Sky!!

We have had our fair share of representatives in the ships' teams with the notable exception of football, even here we seem to have now made the right wing position ours. In two sports the department has dominated the teams, in cricket we have had ten first team players, fielding at least seven in any first team match (see cricket notes). Rugger is our other strong sport, entering more teams in every inter-part competition than anyone else. We have put up 11 members of the first XV and POM(E) CLARKE played for the Naval Base XV. Also we have two members of the first XV Hockey Team.

We did well in the inter-part boxing, coming second to the Seamen with a team few of whom had ever put the gloves on before. Two members, M (E) CURTIS and Mech MOGRIDGE won their weights.

We have done well in the various flight deck sports, the Avfuel deck hockey team are always well in the fore and have won the inter-part hockey stick.

Quote

MEOOD on telephone to MEOOD ARK ROYAL
"Can I shut down my evaporators yet?"

At the end of a short shake down after the docking we had another change in management when Lt. Cdr. WOLFE took over as Senior Engineer. Lt. Cdr. DRAKE flew back to Singapore in a helicopter laden down with suitcases, squash rackets and parcels. Fortunately Albion Air do not charge excess baggage.

Quote

C.S.B. reminiscing on the good old days
"Yes, we used to have pre-wetting, Paint ship - coal ship - Wash down"

We are now starting to prepare for the Portsmouth refit although we have still a few miles to go before arriving home, but if the machinery continues to work as it has done so far, we should make Portsmouth before Christmas.

Quote

Sultans Examination
Questions for Marine
Engineering Fleet
Boards.

Question 3.2 (i)

"How are magazines
flooded in your
ship?" (!!)



The M(E)s take the cake

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

So far as the Medical Department has been concerned, the feature of this commission has been the many and varied tasks outside the ship that we have had. Briefly we have worked with 848 in Nanga Gaat and more recently, Bario; we have sortied with the Royal Marine Detachment in the landing craft up the Borneo rivers; we have been lent to small ships to restore their medical complement, simultaneously reducing our own to half; we have built a school in Sabah as part of the Royal New Zealand Navy's Hearts and Minds campaign; we have found ourselves treating Chinese civilian divers with "bends" and we were even called in consultation by the Army to assist in treating a Ghurka rifleman. But above all we have, we hope, looked after you.

The statistics from the Department unlike those of all the other Departments cannot regrettably be made public. This does not mean that we too can't place things end to end and circum-navigate the globe. However, we must forever remain silent.

But of the staff we can perhaps say a few words. We started the commission with one Sick Berth Chief, one P.O., one Killick and the rest - four of them - S.B.A.s. But then suddenly, it all changed. First we acquired an extra P.O. and then we all changed our titles and we advanced into the technicalities of Medical Technicians classes 1-5, and Medical Assistants. Suddenly the Sick Berth staff became the Medical Department and we all got rated up.

To start with we even had an M02 who was older and senior to the PMO. However that situation resolved itself when the new M02 joined, for the new "young doc" really was younger than Bill Jack - just - and junior - very, and the crowning glory of that appointment is that he is a gyneacologist. They say you can do anything with sailors!

THE STAFF

P.M.O. Surgeon Commander W. R. JACK, MBE, RN

M.0.2 Surgeon Lieutenant Commander D. C. BECKINGHAM, RN

CPOMA T. C. G. O'HAGAN

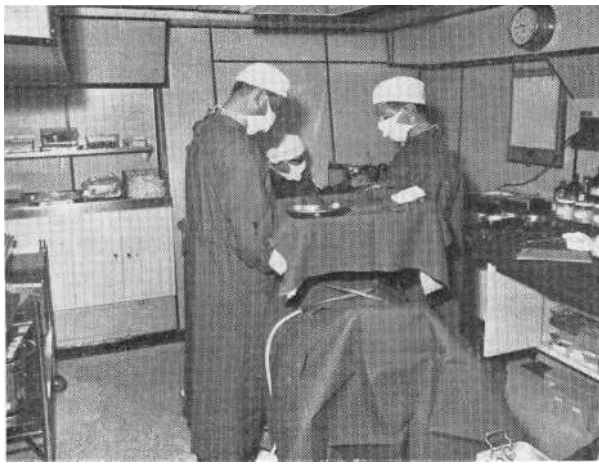
POMA A. GRAHAM

Med Tech 3 E. T. MARTIN

LMA B. P. MAIDMENT

LMA J. KAY

MA R. SULIVAN



*Danger men at work. This was taken live.
The patient stayed that way too!*



Sully gives First Aid.



Alan Graham at Bario.



To the Sick Bay - Down the bomb lift.



Pincher Martin at Nanga Gaat.

ROYAL MARINES DETACHMENT

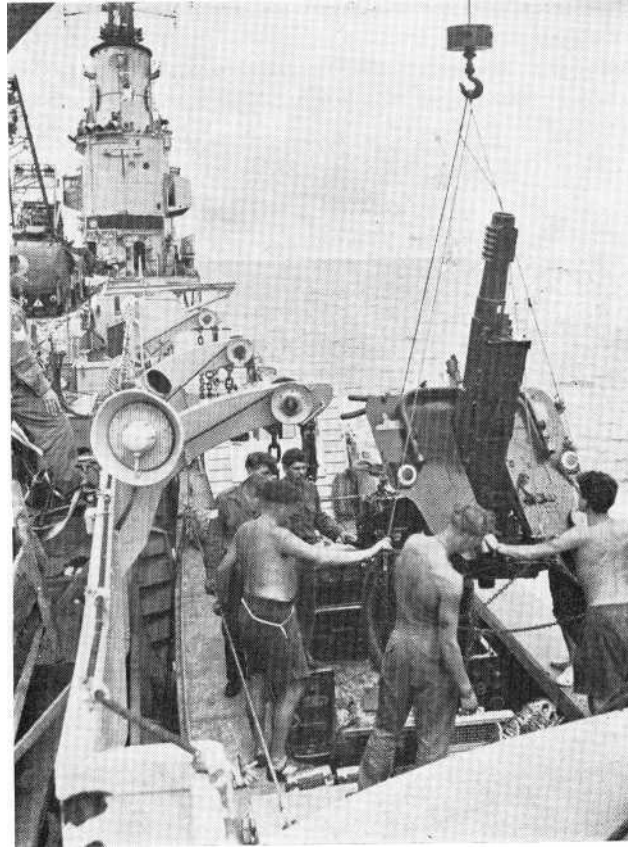
The members of our Royal Marines detachment will have many varied memories of this commission in ALBION. It has been a year and a half of the most diverse activity, operating off the Borneo coast landing and recovering troops and supporting our helicopter squadron ashore at Sibuan and Labuan. The 9th Assault Squadron will reflect on its two trips up the Rajang river to Sibuan and the one to Lundu to collect 42 Commando's stores, and will wonder how much it could have made by charging 3d. a head for everyone taken, for their runs ashore or to the bathing beaches. The Sergeant Major will remember until his dying day the moments when the demand for his Marines for this and that made him wonder if "they" thought we were a complete Commando unit instead of just 32 all ranks. The Landing Craft SNCO will remember paint and the ASO's staff will wake up for months to come after the recurring dream of that piece of kit (whatever it was) right at the back of the deep beam stowages that "they" again want in two minutes.

The Band Sergeant will regret that he never did get the OCRM to play in the volunteer band, and the OCRM thanks his lucky stars that on the one occasion that he nearly did, rain stopped play before blast off.

Operationally, the Wessex 5 helicopter has very largely stolen from the landing craft their former glory in their assault role. The moment of troops and vehicles can now be carried out far more quickly and conveniently by air than sea.



There have been occasions when heavy loads have been carried by sea.



Will it fit in?

but the use of the LCVPs has mainly been domestic.



We have maintained a high standard of serviceability thanks to the crews and our engineer assistants, and they have worked at all the crucial moments. Probably the most interesting times for the crews were those whilst operating South of Singapore with the Naval anti-infiltration patrols. "Bessie", despite all attempts by the flight deck operators to park her on 10 spot, has been with us most of the time, but her only notable battle honour is "Windy Weather" when she was sneakily disabled by a turtle. AOO and his team have contrived to remain calm (and secure) whilst all around seemed out of control, and our operations have gone very well.

For many of us "trained killers", if you'll pardon a Naval expression, this life at sea in a Commando Ship started off rather mysteriously. We found ourselves in a world of Bosun's Mates (where's the Bosun then?) and pipes, of "Roulements" and "Logreqs" and Stickorbats", and all the doors were half way up the walls and one definitely needed cricket pads and a pith helmet whilst proceeding in what we thought was the right way to gangway. Now, we hope, we frown upon such stupidity with the rest of you--we have learned the hard way.

We have, of course, had some famous runs ashore- Japan, Hong Kong (3), Mombasa (2), Aden (dangerous), the Seychelles (!) and the now very familiar Singapore. We had a week's military training with 40 Commando and had 10 day's leave at Penang during the docking period. We have met some extremely interesting people in the units we have carried, and had the unusual experience of working with all five RM Commando units during our first 6 months' operating.

It is, luckily, human nature to forget many of the less pleasurable moments of one's lives. Of course there have been moments of frayed tempers and tension, but when we look back at all the events too numerous to mention here, you fish-heads and airy-fairy types are not a bad lot, and it's been a pleasure to work with you. We are sure this will continue, but do remember, ALBION is a COMMANDO Ship.

THE SEAMEN DEPARTMENT

On looking back over the period of the past two years and four months we will always remember the times that caused us great amusement. As far as the seamen were concerned, two things were obvious as one gazed at the shining faces that jostled for their joining cards that day - in RNB(P). One, that we were going to have a very young department, and two, that there did not seem enough for what we were expected to do..

This, as it turned out, was the same heartfelt cry heard throughout the ship. Introduction to life on board a ship must have been an eyeopener to our very many "First timers" as the refit got under way, and the ship filled with dockyard maties which kept popping out of every dark hole and whom one tripped over in remote corners.

Then out of this chaos we found ourselves afloat, commissioned and on our way for work up at Portland in November. Here our new boats crews had to find their feet and they could not have done too badly as we still had some when we left, battered but afloat (just).

At least the weather gave us the chance to step ashore, foreign in Gib. with sunshine, while learning a new Combined Ops job.

Then farewell to Mother England: we were off. The Bay of Biscay in sympathy was kind to us, we renewed our acquaintance with Gib and soon found ourselves going down the Suez Canal where it was the turn of our Quartermasters to show that they could steer in a straight line.

In the Red Sea some of the seamen were given instruction in bomb throwing and others in handling a Sterling, the sounds of their practice often disturbing the sun-worshippers. By the end of the commission nearly every other seamen had mastered one or both of these nasty gadgets.

At Aden the full meaning of being in an operational area was made clear as the motor whaler circled the ship nightly with its deadly load. And the department were also responsible for armed escorts for vehicles and groups of personnel. Armed with a sterling and his 007 licence clutched in his hot sticky hand, many were sent to ride shotgun.

Off to Mombasa and en route "Daisy May", whilst removing a weather screen cut the wrong side of the lashing he was holding, found himself in the Indian Ocean. He was quickly recovered by the whaler which speaks well for all those dinner time and tea time sea boat drills, though it did go down once without the bung.

Having left Mombasa with the usual firewood we soon found ourselves entering the Straits of Sumatra where the RPs, in addition to warning the lookouts of the presence of ships, began the task of reporting to Bukit Gombak all aircraft seen by the revolving bedstead. A constant job in the Air Defence Area. Who amongst them will ever forget Delta Charlie Golf.

Singapore, the changeover, we had the weight! This was soon proved as we went scurrying across that stretch of water we got to know so well to do our first roulement. Where the Guides and Assault Supply Parties made up by our gallant Gunners proved their mettle.

We haunted that coast pretty thoroughly in the eighteen months in support of our aircraft and troops ashore, and with the numerous escorts that we've had. They have always been well watered and fuelled by the watch on deck. We ourselves have done replenishments galore for our share of food and wine. And have been treated to the sight of our Gauchos and their whirling bolasses competing with the line-shooting Redcoats.

A certain rating has even proved that our liferafts work in the most practical way. Well done NILE party. The Special Paint Party is still competing with the Side Party to see who can use the most paint.

Even our short spells in S.N.B. gave us time for little rest as the numbers of seamen who spent all night on boat patrol in the Straits of Johore steadily grew each time we entered harbour.

We pulled our share of Communal duties, a job which even managed to suit a few. It is said that "Spud Harrison" spent more time on his knees during the job change period than on his feet.

We have managed to run classes for and had passed by the Fleet Boards. Five LS for PO. Seven ABs for LS. Starred all our Basics. Pumped the required knowledge into all JS and Ords to make good sailors of them, and have in the mill at the time of printing, another four LS for PO and seventeen ABs for LS.

The seamen made themselves felt in the realms of sport, the backbone of the First and Second XI Football teams being made of Dabtoes. The Tug of War team reigned for most of the commission before being beaten, Kobe must have weakened them, they have never looked so clean, must have been all those baths.

Over the whole period most of the sandscratchers have rotated through various jobs and towards the end of the Foreign could say that they were jacks of all Trades, but the shining faces were replaced by a more worn look.



The Sea Boat in use. Not "For exercise" this time.

The department has had to work hard to fulfil its commitments and it has met the many challenges set before it, and whether it has been rain or shine "Sorry No Oilskins" its members in the main retained that sense of humour so vital when doing so many of the jobs which befall the lot of a seaman.

When you read this, the Grey Ghost will perhaps not be your Host any more. But a memory of places visited and lessons learnt, to be stored and related during a night watch another time another place. Good Luck.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

The thought of joining a "flat top" from such places as Whitehall Wireless (London), Northwood NATO Comcen and Burnham Radio filled us with horror and it took a while before we were thinking like sea-going matelots again. In the months we spent at Portsmouth most of the staff managed to find their way to the Bridge Wireless Office at one time or another, only to find themselves detailed off to attend various courses and to go on loan drafts.

When the dockyard maties moved off the ship in Portsmouth, they left us with lots of new equipment but omitted to tell us how it worked. The first week or so at Portland was spent in finding out exactly what we could do, at the same time trying to convince the SCO that we knew what we were doing but were just out of practice.

For an eighteen month commission, it has been rather uneventful and the only time the department worked at full pitch for any length of time was during exercise "Windy Weather", when we had the heavy drama of being in two watches. The majority of R.N. sparkers come into contact with the Merchant Navy at one time or another, and we were no exception with two distress calls to our credit so far. We were sent from Portland to offer assistance to a Norwegian ship floundering off the Channel Islands in a gale - the fact that there was no salvage money had nothing to do with us, see your D.O. Whilst on passage from Mombasa to Singapore, a request for medical assistance was received from the Russian ship "Poti", and this gave us the unique experience (for a warship) of working someone from Redland over the air, but "TKS" means "Thank You" in any language on a morse key.

Borneo has been our stamping ground for most of the time, and it didn't take us long to adapt ourselves to the Army and RAF operators who always seem so much slower than Jack, and "switch off" as soon as dusk arrives - something that we would dearly like to see adopted in this mob! Every time that the ship does a Commando Assault, the first aircraft ashore usually carries two R.O.s of the Helicopter Control Team who handle the communication side of things until the Bootnecks are established. The HCT tell us that they do a good job under difficult conditions, but we just smile and recall the time in Aden when a smalley boy was offered in exchange for their landrover - we never did get that back, come to think of it.

We have had some excellent results from radiotelephone calls to the UK, quite a number of you took advantage of the scheme and we hope we gave a service comparable to the civilian liners. It was certainly cheaper for you because we make no extra charge for our services on telegrams and telephone calls - a can of beer a time was thought of but we hadn't the nerve to ask for it.

We are of course all looking forward to getting home in September, and perhaps in later years when our memories have mellowed, we will say "It wasn't a bad commish I suppose".

THE OPERATIONS ROOM

We've been quite a versatile lot in the Ops Room this commission. Just consider:- The Direction Officer has tried hard to apply the principles of Work Study to both Operations Room and Quarterdeck - the results of his studies on the latter had to be suppressed. Lt. Yetman has spent much time with liferafts, Wardroom goffers and his medical friends. The Boats Officer is occasionally seen in the Ops Room and even the Editor of this book has been caned for Watchkeeping whenever he can be dragged away from his Heinz varieties of duties - where else do you suppose he has done all the editing? Various other officers have blundered in now and again, mostly on their way elsewhere, despite all the No Gangway notices. The Chief P.R.I., that fine figure of a man, seems to prefer to spend most of his time in the Seaman's Regulating Office or swimming around underneath the ship accompanied by another RP rating, equally noted for his slim profile. The RP.'s have had to be bribed to leave H.Q.1, the Quarterdeck, the Foc's'le, etc., to give us the benefit of all their expensive training, and the R.P.s generally seem to have been the backbone of the Seaman Department as boats' crews, gangway staff, postman, boat-swains party to mention just a few organisation to whom the demand for watchkeeping in the Ops Room has caused considerable inconvenience.

Of course we've done things in the Ops Room too - apart from our roles as the eyes and nerve centre of the ship! We've controlled the aircraft for hours and hours. We've done lots of Carrier Controlled approaches (I refuse to be pinned down to checkable statistics) and even, once or twice, tried to tell the L.C.V.P.s where to go whenever they managed to get their radios switched on. We're responsible too for much loss of sleep for the greenies (seriously though, they've done a grand job) and blown the fuses of the Communication Department's transmitters as frequently as possible without arousing their suspicions that we do it on purpose. The AOR R.P. crew has helped considerably to add to the confusion of roulements and Assault Exercises and the A.I.O. coffee boat has managed to provide unenviable service at all hours of the day or night. The rumour that the ability to make a drinkable cup of coffee is part of the R.P. starring exam is quite unfounded. If it were, a number of ratings still would not have qualified.

Finally, our achievements in the artistic field should not be forgotten. We do not claim to have invented it, nor are we entirely responsible for its effectiveness, but the noise of the radar on the equipment of the Beat Group, the P.M.O.'s Electronic Organ and a very senior officer's tape recorder, is a startling "New Sound" even if not always appreciated! We have christened it "The Metric Beat".

"BUT YOU HAVEN'T ANY GUNS"

This is the normal first remark but life is not one long holiday for the Gunnery department. (Yes, folks, ALBION had us fooled too). Our task is to store ammunition for the Commando, provide weapons and advice to the Squadron, and defend the Ship. On the side we run the Offensive Support, organise air weapons practices, produce ceremonial, guard the Naval Base, look after the laundry, encourage the Band and help the Commander run the Ship.

Early in the Commission we started trying out (classified) bright ideas and many will recall the unique, wooden underslung load which fell so regularly in to the sea. Suffice it to say it was all worthwhile.

The Commando have never called on us to help them operationally with ammunition but its custody has kept the Gunner's Party busy as, with other ammunition and armament stores, it makes us almost the largest store keeping department. Detachment of 848 flights to Aden and Sabah has given us an outside interest and "Dato" Stone an interesting venture to the interior of Sarawak to discover what Bulwark really had left behind.

A great many hours have been spent watch keeping on Bofors guns because of "Confrontation". This has enabled us to save valuable daylight hours by first and middle watch shoots. The unexpected gunfire has brought many sarong clad officers out into 2U cabin flat but P.O.(GI) McAuley did well in preventing them abandoning ship.

The highlights of the Commission have been an offensive support exercise, (Guardrail), with a helicopter borne R.A. observer controlling, in rapid succession, a Hunter then a Scimitar strike, the latter with 1,000 lb bombs, followed by a destroyer's shoot. Secondly the finale of the Beat Retreat at Labuan - the Ship catching the glow of the setting sun, the "Rajah Brooke" moving along the side of the Padang behind the massed Greenjackets and RM bands playing Rule Britannia. As Confrontation ended the following day, and after the political battering the Navy had in early 1966, the music seemed just comment on the Royal Navy's achievement in Malaysian waters 1963-1966.

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

"Our business always was to do the business of the day in the day" to quote the Duke of Wellington. And so once again another commission is ending for the Supply Department of HMS ALBION. A commission full of incidents and one in which the Supply Branch has been sorely strained, but, we like to think, never failed to meet the Duke's maxim. (Bv Ed: Copy received 3 weeks after deadline!)

You will find separate articles from the Naval Stores, Victualling, Pay Office, Captain's Office, Cookery and Assault Supply departments. One must not forget however, the LEP's article, which unfortunately had to be rejected by the printers - who could not reproduce their beautiful text. Their Chief Steward has asked us to pass on one tip, to any bachelors trying their luck in Hong Kong or Singapore. The phrase you have all been longing to know goes like this:

Gum-man lay haw yee tong-ore hon ding-yin; ma? which to the uneducated few means: "Would you like to see a film with me tonight?"

The highlights of life onboard for the LEPs was undoubtedly the Party given by the Wardroom for their families during the 1965 visit to Hong Kong and the visit to London.

In the world of NAAFI over 22,000 gallons of draught beer and a quarter of a million cans of beer have disappeared somewhere and all this despite the famous occasion when all the Chinese staff were left behind when ALBION made a hasty withdrawal from Hong Kong!

NAVAL STORES

14th May 1964 saw the arrival of the new commission Stores (S) - conspicuous by their absence were the old staff. Then followed a free for all search of the ship to locate storerooms with the aid of a "green" guide, SA Green, who had been in the ship all of two weeks.

Ensuing weeks saw the arrival of a variety of "pussers" goods, worthy of mention was the advent of 800 Aircraft securing chains in one glorious snarled heap - this little lot took 10½ hours to unravel. Laugh followed laugh - duplicated orders for Teepol, Buckets, Soft Soap, Calgonite and Soda all of which arrived from outlying depots in fleets of lorries late afternoon - Mutter! Mutter! Mutter!

Statistics of stores issued - dull stuff - 1,000 torches - winking lights in the lift well on cinema nights - 20,000 torch batteries; enough to run 1,600 transistor radios and 1,600 record players - take your pick. Finally 2,100 gallons of paint has been used - oh for a ship without rounds!

Loss forms completed - highest and lowest - a Wessex rotor blade value £1,980 (a clanger dropped by 848 off Aden) and a Id tommy bar raised by a certain POSA (with a grudge against airy fairies?)

Opportunities for a Jack Dusty to see how the other half lives are few and far between, but several of the staff were able to accompany the 9th Assault Squadron RM on a logistic support operation up river to Sibiu, an 18 hour trip not without excitement - one LCA being holed by flotsam.

One unsolved problem still being pursued diligently by LSA Hambly is to find a hatch large enough to take the Padre's U/S Organ.

S & S Expeds

Our leisure time was not spent very much differently from what one would expect from a Matelot abroad: Beer, Women, Beer and more Women. We did however manage to corner one of the Minibuses on four occasions, and I think one can safely say a good time was had by all with many thanks to our opposite numbers in the Victualling world, who as well as sharing our fun on the trips also donated generously to the preparation. Thanks also to a tolerant Commander (S), who ensured that we lacked nothing in the way of Food and Equipment (within reason) on each occasion.

We had two day trips, one to Jason's Bay, and the other during our first trip to Hong Kong. The latter one we spent touring the New Territories and during that occasion several of our members managed to get lost in an area very close to the Red China Border, fortunately or otherwise all eventually turned up safely, and nobody was left behind. The typhoon which made us sail before our expected time managed to deplete our numbers by two for while, but that is really another story, and if you wish to know more about this SA Vinall or SA Bald will be pleased to inform you.

The two main trips were, one for four days, and another for ten days. During the former we travelled up the west side of Malaysia spending our first night in somebody's garden somewhere on the outskirts of Malacca. The next part of our journey took up as far as Kuala Lumpur where an extremely good time was had by all during our overnight stay. Readers who have been to Kuala Lumpur will know what we mean by overnight, I believe CPOSA (V) Raggett has more details of this rather blank period.

From Kuala Lumpur we cut across the country to the East Coast, and then made our way back to Singapore staying one night at both Kuala Rompin and Jason's Bay (moonlight swimming and to hell with the sharks!) before finally arriving back at ALBION.

For the ten day trip we decided to travel up the East Coast, and we set off with no razor blades and no real plans, except to make the best of whatever happened along the way.

We stayed a few days at a very much recommended Kuala Rompin. The "South Pacific" type coastline proved to be rather a fine place to laze around but after a few days we decided to move on to find somewhere else to be lazy. Kuantan proved to be our next stop mainly because we had a rather sick senior member on our hands. To be precise we stopped at Kuantan General Hospital, and here we placed our patient in the competent (we thought) hands of the hospital staff. (He was led off muttering many rude words about OD Jack Dusties and sabotage). From the hospital we moved onto the beach where camp was made in very romantic, tropical surroundings. The reader may think "romantic" a strange word to be used by a Matelot when describing a camp, but it certainly proved to be exactly that, as within minutes of our arrival two of our illustrious company had managed to make accepted advances to young Ladies.



Exped?

We spent the rest of our leave at Kuantan boozing, sleeping, drinking, eating, and even finding more time between our swimming and sunbathing to partake of liquid refreshment. I think you will agree a pleasant way to spend the time. Also during these pleasant relaxed days we found time to make a few trips into town to visit the few bars, and also of course to inspect at close quarters our sick oppo. and his attendant nurses, and of course to tell him what a wonderful time we were having. The latter information we found did him no end of good, and after a while it became dangerous to visit him unescorted!

Of course our leave, as for everybody else, had to come to an end, and back we came to the ship very tired and "bronzy", and with mixed feelings. We will

all remember our Minibus trips, with the few troubled moments, and the many lighter ones.

Thank you CPOSA(V) Raggett for taking on all our troubles, thank you the Royal Marine M.T. staff past and present, and thank you also the Nuffield Trust, without you it would never have happened.

If wanting Stores after September 8th
NUTS and bolts

ODE TO A JACK DUSTY (V)

We are the boys known as Jack Dusty Vee,
Clothing and feeding the ship's company,
Led we are by two Pussers bold,
Who coax us and hoax us like lambs in the fold.
We're matey with all by hook and by crook,
Of course there's the exception, the old Chief Cook.
We store with provisions; fresh, frozen and dry,
Cash clothing and mess gear all pass by.
Times there are when we're most chokka
When detailed off to stow the spud locker.
Tea boats and limers we all dish out
With measures so paltry the caterers shout,
Down to the slop room they troop one by one,
Only to be met with "We ain't got none".
The cry goes up for varied "Nine O'Clockers"
But what can we do, they've killed all the cockers?
Down to the storerooms we go gay and hearty,
(What happened to the "S" Rating of the General Mess Party?)
Roulements, RAS's all come our way,
No guilty conscience on the day of the pay.
One victualler we have is now full of glee,
He's been accepted in the realm of A.B.
Gone are his days of tea, sugar and beans,
He'll find himself rigging those upper deck screens.
If boots you require for a flight deck ramble,
Then come and see the P.O. (Young Andy Campbell)
A Draft Chit you have, you're going away
Then take him your bedding down in 6 J.
Our boss as you know is S.O. (V)
Alongside you'll find him on No. 1 tee,
July is the month when we all shall grieve,
The lucky old victualler is being relieved.
The D.S.O. is always wailing
For a Jack Dusty to go with him a'sailing,
This he does on the up and up.
And to prove it he comes back with a regatta cup.
There's Wally, Woody, Buck and Sads,
On the whole, Not bad lads,
Jan, Taff and Stan make the team up no less,
Blimey! I forget, there's old father (S).

PAY OFFICE

Since the beginning of the commission, well over a million pounds have slipped out of the Pay Office safe, and been placed at the tender mercies of the ship's company. We will not attempt to guess where all this money is now - suffice to say that we have left £50,000 in Hong Kong, £35,000 in Aden, and £28,000 in just one week in Japan. But quite a lot has been saved too - £40,000 in the Post Office bank, £120,000 in Remittances and £20,000 in Postal Orders, and most of all, of course, in allotments,



Anyone know the combination?

We are all set for a take-over bid of Cook's Travel Agency as soon as we reach Pompey. Our international desk has worked more than thirty full-scale currency exchanges, dabbling with Gibraltar pounds, Aden dinars (three times), Mombasa shillings (twice), Hong Kong dollars (three times), Seychellas rupees, Ethiopian dollars, French Somaliland francs, Malaysian dollars, and the Japanese with their fabulous yen - and now back to U.K. bobs and tanners! Often payments have been made by remote control - such as when the Squadron were in Aden, and our office in Hong Kong; and when 848 were ashore in Borneo, while their ledgers were with us in Ethiopia,

We recall (with mixed feelings!), collecting money on a helicopter stop, peeling spuds at Assault Stations, sweating on a R.A.S. inhaul, breaking down in a minibus on a wet Japanese Sunday, being stuck in the Minibus again in a bog in Kenya and being gassed in darkness at Action Stations. Nevertheless it's been a great and certainly memorable commission!

THE CAPTAIN'S OFFICE STAFF

Well, there we were, tucked away nicely in 4U. And we thought nobody knew we were there, UNTIL we found ourselves besieged by 700 ratings demanding Medals (Heaven only knows what for). However, this was the climax of two and a half years of sometimes hard work in our little haven, Somewhere along the way we managed to accumulate about 10,000 letters, pushing out some 7,000 in reply, All this involved us in tapping our typewriter keys approximately 12,000,000 times, which, converted into terms of distance, would represent a continuous line of typing some 72,500 feet long! No, we haven't measured it either! On top of all this, the PO Writer actioned nearly 2,500 requests of one kind or another, whilst of course being the main source of information for the ship's company. All this no doubt helped towards some of the names we got called at one time or another, Three Badge Floating Biro's being a favourite among the printable ones,

This however did not prevent the Staff from enjoying life, and we did get our share of recreation. The Secretary and the PO Writer were prominent in the Concert Party, whilst the Leading Writer was often to be seen sporting for the ship in one game or another, Rumour has it too that Office II staff were to be seen drinking down Bugis Street, but, for the sake of the Branch, we have always denied this, blaming it on our brothers in the Pay Office. However we are all agreed that it was all well worth it, if only for Japan and Hong Kong where some of our most happy hours were spent!!!

THE CHEFS

First of all let me introduce you to the branch:-

Sub. Lt. B. WINTIE - Sub. Lt. D. PULFORD.

Chief Cooks

A. Wallace, B.E.M., R. Owens, S. Palmer.

Petty Officers

A. Walker, C. Pearce, S. Clews, L. Cox.

Leading Cooks

N. Taylor, V. DeMaine, H. Lewis, B. Hannat, T. McCully, M. Coomer, B. Baker.

Cooks

M. Gearing, R. Bolsover, R. Pinks, N. Ames, V. Fenelly, J. Talmage, I. Haywood, W. Johnstone, R. Jackson, G. Markham, T. Masters, D. Lester, S. Burton, D. Dobson, H. Fairclough, R. Routledge, P. Calland, D. Anderson, P. Towse, R. Pope, J. Stevenson, A. Bruce, J. Bekusch, and the three Squadron cooks R. Spence, D. Cardwell, and T. Browning.

Well now we've been introduced I'll carry on with a few details about us. Sub Lt. Wintie left the ship during April and Sub Lt. Pulford assumed the duties of Cookery Officer. All but two of the cooks and a P.O. Cook have done at least two years on the ship so far so as you can imagine we know the ship quite well.

We started off in May 1964 when we all joined ALBION together with the exception of four who were advance party and Chief Cook Wallace who joined at the end of the last commission. Of course, we had the usual procedure, all the cooks of the last commission were going on leave and we were trying to get our kit unpacked at the same time. We finally managed to get settled in okay but there was one amongst us who was well and truly settled in; P.O. Pearce, for he had already done the whole of the last commission on board and now he's almost completed his second.

It was when we moved into dry-dock that we first had a taste of real hard work. We went over to the shore-side galley which no doubt quite a few of you remember quite well. There we had to keep the fires going all the time piling on the coal plus doing the meals and by the time the duty watch had finished at night they looked more like the "Black and White Minstrels" than chefs. Some of us were lucky and went into the barracks where we quite enjoyed our stay working in the galley.

Let's skip the next few months and go to the day we left Portsmouth. Most of us were a little morbid about leaving home for eighteen months and in the mess that night it was just like a funeral parlour. Then as we went along things picked up and we managed to keep ourselves reasonably happy. On our way we lost about twenty dishes of chips going through the Bay of Biscay. A couple of chefs were chased down the galley by tanks and pots of various shapes and sizes. After that the rest of the trip to Singapore went quite smoothly for us except Aden where 'Bats' Coomer and the author went ashore for a "pint" and ended the evening off just right when someone decided to fire a bazooka at our taxi! Needless to say we didn't go ashore in Aden again!! We did have one more little mishap just before we reached Singapore at a place called Gan, a couple of our band decided to prolong their stay. Yes, "Buck" Taylor and Jack Bekusch kept us all waiting an hour or so but managed to get back alright, a little adrift, a little tipsy perhaps, but they made it.

I think the hardest part of all for us were the times we had troops onboard, when there were about four or five hundred extra mouths to feed. Meal times in the galley were an utter chaos, there'd be tea urns, dishes of chips and potatoes all over the place, but we always managed to get it out on time and were always thankful when eight o'clock came the next morning, and even more thankful when eleven thirty came when we could retire until eight the next morning. I think the hardest of all was when we had the Malay Infantry and the Gurkhas onboard. They could neither speak or understand English and didn't know how to use tea urns or anything, but as usual we managed to feed them all somehow.

A couple of the ship's cooks were put into Barrio, they were "Scouse" Bruce and Bob Pope, they seemed to have enjoyed themselves quite a lot there. Of course, the three Squadron chefs were in and out of there all the time.

On the whole the commission has been quite hard but it's passed very quickly indeed and even now you can still hear the morning-watch stomp being performed with the chefs having a crafty "burn" when they go to ditch the gash. Sometimes you'd walk past the galley and think it was a mad-house. Then there's the bakery which still turns out bread and rolls for us, and some of the escorts we've had. There's a job where you sweat away all night and part of the morning and your bed is the most welcome sight at seven o'clock in the morning more than anything else in the world. There's the Chief's and P.O.'s galley where they, like the rest of us, plod on day after day. The Chief Cooks in charge of these departments have managed to keep things running smoothly and, as most of you know, the meals or your bread have never been adrift. Most well known, (of course) is Chief Cook Wallace; he's stood there morning, noon and night in that galley making sure everything is O.K. and that there are no snags. Some of you may regard him as an Ogre or something but he isn't at all, in fact there isn't one of us who haven't enjoyed working for him. It was quite funny at times, perhaps we would all be skylarking then someone would shout "Here's Wally" and we'd all be like little choir boys. Anyway, congratulations Chief on being selected for promotion. Things like this have made this quite a good commission for us and given us quite a few laughs. I don't know whether we broke the leave breaking record or not but one or two of this band of tearaways had a good try.

We work hard and play hard too, for the Cooks provide the backbone of S & S sports teams - two of them, Anderson and Cardwell have played for the ship's soccer team and Ldg. Ck. Coomer played for the Navy Command Team in water polo.

Two of us left the ship during commission. P.O. Ck. Webster, who had to be flown home from the Seychelles owing to personal troubles and L/Ck. Shepherd who flew home in March as he'd finished his "time". They were soon replaced by P.O. Ck. Cox and Ck. Fairclough who soon got into ALBION's routine.

Yes, we certainly have had some laughs in and outside the branch. It's been hard graft but good experience for us all, we've not done badly because not one of the cooks has been awarded a Good Conduct Badge, the oldest one of us being twenty one.

There isn't much more one can say except all of us in the Cook(S) branch would like to wish the ship's company all the best in the future and we hope to meet up with you sometime and we can have a good old natter about the eighteen months foreign and ten months at home on the "Old Grey Ghost" and just one more thing: we think we're the best bunch of cookies the Royal Navy has ever had.

ASSAULT SUPPLY

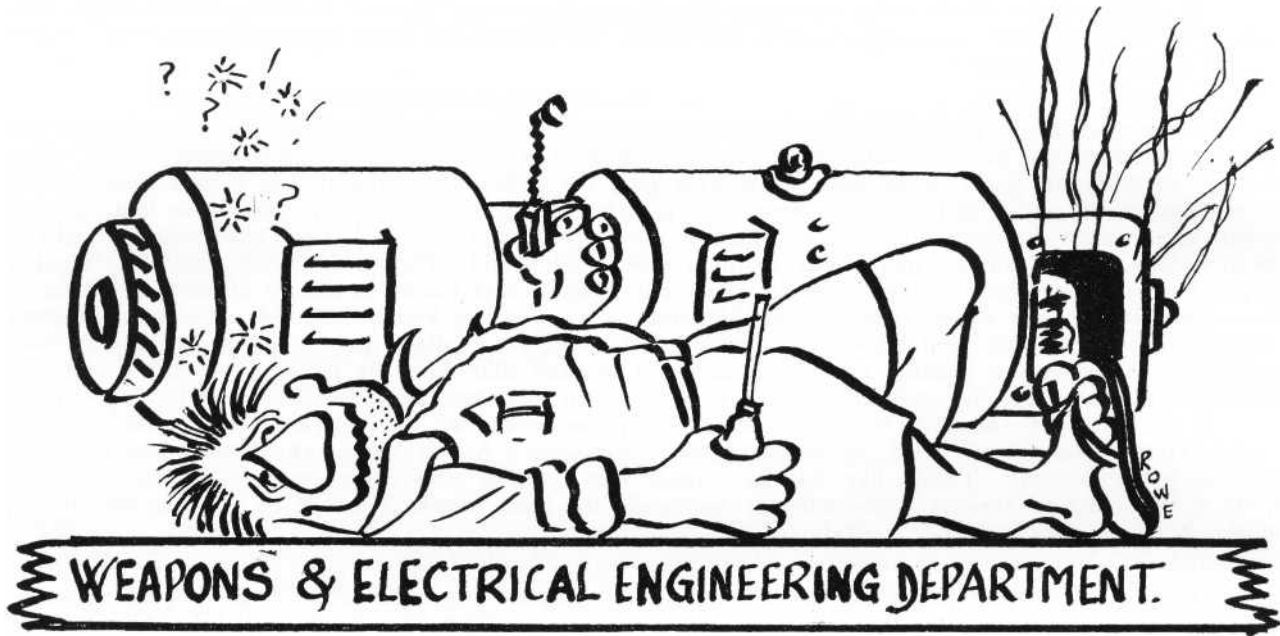
The Assault Supply Department consists of seven Royal Marines. (It has been worked out that the store area occupied warrants 57 Royal Marines and the ship requirements warrants 107 Royal Marines) Vehicle spares - radio spares - tentage - jerricans - compo plus a great deal of work for embarked units, underslung loads, all this makes up the job. Add to this:-- sentries, guards, clean ship, pay escorts, and you will have a small part of the number of jobs the Royal does.

The store areas, without a Commando to fill them, are looked at longingly by departments who need space - let them in - and they get out as a favour - minutes before the unit embarks. Somehow the tasks have been done and on time.

Marine WELLBURN has been a regular member of the ship's hockey team, and when the Royal Marines and the S and S have been combined, then some very good teams have resulted.

The liaison between ASO's Department - Victualling - Stores and all other parts of ship has been very good during the past months. Strained at times but usually good!!

In general the department has always done a good job whatever it has been - loyal to RM and S & S throughout and let's be honest "Jack" and "Royal" are not always good company!!



It was in the summer of 1964 that most of us joined the department. We found the ship in dockyard hands with all the grime and discomfort that entails. Most of us had little or no turnover from our predecessors so were forced to find out everything for ourselves. Much hard work lay ahead and we set to immediately on the task of getting our equipment to work properly and ourselves accustomed to the ship's routine. Discovering which switches and which fuses controlled which piece of equipment or circuit was no easy matter for tallies were missing everywhere. We replaced literally hundreds of them! Before first sailing, Harbour Acceptance Trials had to be completed and this entailed almost endless hours of work for some of our members in getting equipment like generators up to an acceptable standard. And the state of D.C. cables, A.E.L.s and fans was confused to say the least. However by the time we sailed for the Far East things were already looking brighter - except for leaving home! It is a credit to all concerned that, today, it is the odd defect which causes remark and not the odd piece of equipment which is "actually working properly!"

The refit days seem very distant now and much has been accomplished since. Our compartments are hardly recognisable as the ones we found at Portsmouth. A few hard figures give some indication, but only some, of what we have achieved. We have used well over 20,000 yards of cable on re-wire jobs and that does not include the amounts used by the dockyards during our maintenance periods! A colossal 24,000 lamps and 8,000 fluorescent tubes have been replaced! Some 48,500 fuses have somehow gone somewhere! Soon after the D.E.D. period some 440 newly charged A.E.L.s were re-commissioned in the space of a fortnight! And who knew it was no uncommon thing for our Telephone Exchange to handle over 2,500, yes 2,500 calls a day?

However, it has not all been hard work. We feel we have played our part, too, in ship's activities like the Concert Party, and the Ship's Company Dance, besides, being sports enthusiasts. C.R.E.A. Clutterbuck. LEM Rowland. EM Fenton and EM Holden all played in the ship's rugby team. EMs Barkley and Mcateer were first XI soccer team regulars and A/LREM Archer player many times. EMs Green, Hargreaves and Milne played for the second eleven. The department boasted three players - EA Fairhurst, REA Walker and EM Ray - in the ship's highly successful hockey team. W. Mech Daragon became the 1966 Far East Fleet Small Arms Champion and Rifle Champion, besides accounting for many other trophies. In fact, we hear his wife has designs on a new sideboard so that all his cups and shields can be stored in one place! In the ship's boxing championships EMs Fenton and Milne won their weights. PO EL Allan and EM Ballantyne won the 1965 "Uckers" competition. In the ship's water-polo team EM Hodges was a consistent player. In the Swimming Gala, too, we had our successes. Commander Holgate came third in the Senior Officers' Race and who can forget S/LT Forster in the two lengths butterfly event when all we could see of him on the homeward stretch were his finger-tips breaking the surface! But he came in third!

Looking back over the past two years is interesting but how amazing it is that troublesome times are soon forgotten and how, in retrospect, things which caused consternation at the time, are now a source of amusement. Like the time when rumour had it that the WEE Messdeck was hoarding beer. In a flash the Master-at-Arms and his team from the C.I.D. swooped on the messdeck and nabbed the offenders! The Captain's Table that followed must surely have been one of the longest ever held in ALBION! Not many of us can claim to be successful fliers - nor can a certain EM. One night, imagining he had grown wings he took off from an upstairs balcony at HMS TERROR in attempt to prove that Newton knew nothing about apples. Newton won! We are very glad to say that this EM is now well on the way to recovery and not disposed towards a second attempt. There was, too, the case of the P.P.E. candidate who on being asked what was meant by de-gaussing had no hesitation in replying "It's a system used by the Engineers, sir, to clean soot out of the funnel!"

In April 1966 we were all saddened by the sudden death, by heart attack, of one of the most popular members of the ship's company - LEM Tasker. He will long be remembered by us all for his outstanding cheerfulness.

Much else has happened which slips the memory or cannot be included through lack of space. It is certain though that we have all found new friends and all will have our separate reminiscences of a commission which will not soon be forgotten.

GUESS WHICH BRANCH?

Looking at the list of officers borne and their duties gave me a vivid picture of my life at sea. I remember one day in particular. It started badly with a shake at 0220, evidently we were due to pass through the Mala Wall Channel and I was required in the Ops room to keep "D" awake. Fortunately I was relieved from this task at about 0600 only to be presented with 12 photographs of Tigabu Island with instructions to make a mosaic. This completed, the cryptic order "Interpret that" came. This was quite a poser as no brief was given so obviously a 3rd Phase report was not required as the command was awaiting a reply. 2nd Phase reports are only to amplify 1st Phase, so that was my requirement - a "hot" report. Extract from staff paper: "The purpose of a 1st Phase report is to obtain a positive statement as quickly as possible, in answer to the purpose for which the sortie was flown". This made the answer easy - "It's an island, Sir!" After that I rapidly removed myself from the bridge.

After the usual breakfast of fruit juice and a paludrin tablet I found a worried looking Dentist just getting up. His X-Ray machine was giving trouble. No one knew whether it was the emmitter or the film which was u/s. After looking at the stock books and plans of the ship I found my radio active store and with the aid of a source we were able to prove that the machine wasn't working!

At about this time loud noises of protestation were coming from behind Doug Hale's beard, he was after the blood of the paper caterer; Someone had pinched the "Playboy" and "Penthouse" from the Wardroom. At least they had left the hard covers behind. Thinks: "Now I know why he persuaded me to take the job over".

Now we had reached our exercise area and the assault was in full swing. Duty in the Ops room - running around with a chinagraph keeping stateboards up to date. COMAF was so used to them being behind that even having had the hot word from his staff and written in "London" we were caught with "Why isn't the board up to date? - it should read London". Ah well - you can't win them all.

There was just time to grab a quick bite of lunch in the Wardroom when it was announced that the helicopter carrying the press was due. They had to be met and looked after. They tend to make life a little difficult when in the middle of an assault they want a helicopter to be ranged from the hangar so they can photograph it. Then there was the defence correspondent of the Guardian who stayed over night, she slept in the Captain's cabin (aft I might add, whilst the Captain used his sea cabin).

I was now feeling a little uneasy about my own work and tried to call on my colleagues for help. Alas, Stew was busy sampling the wardroom wines - in line of duty of course - teaching the Mids the finer things in life and the Boss was far too busy producing the Argus and sorting out mess problems.

Trying to eat dinner I was just managing to edit this book at the same time when John comes up and lets drop that the Captain needed some more library books to stop his doors slamming.

A quick run through of the rugby programme followed, a team was selected for the next match and, as I had to ref, a bout of 5BX was called for.

Feeling exhausted after a really strenuous day I managed to crawl to my pit only to discover the Met dept. had run out of paper for the Argus. Staggering around, the yellow paper was found and within seconds I was back in my bunk.

In the half conscious state between sleep and awareness I heard "In 15 seconds time it will be 0645" and with a start I woke up fully to discover that it had been a nightmare. We were safely alongside the wall in Singapore - working tropical routine and the first class was due at 0745. Ah well time for another quick sleep!! ZZZZZ

THE UNOFFICIAL CHINESE

At the onset of the commission, the laundry was worked by a small band of "volunteers" from the ship's company. Although they did a grand job, it was with relief (mainly by the laundry volunteers) that on our first arrival in Singapore, the Unofficials embarked.

Led by their No. 1, Mr. Chiang, they were soon hard at work and within two days, the laundry, tailor shop and cobblers were open. For reasonable prices one could have a suit made, a pair of shoes



The Button Crusher?

made to measure, or hand in any size bundle of dhoby and get it back laundered and ironed within 24 hours. In addition there is always a smiling Unofficial ready at any time of the day to serve you with a goffer on the Forecastle.

One may complain if a button is missing off a shirt or there is too much starch in a shirt, but on the whole these cheerful Chinese make a valuable contribution to the welfare of the ship.

The services of the tailor and shoemaker will be lost before the ship leaves the Far East Station but the laundry firm is returning with us to the U.K. and remain for the next commission.

Well done and thanks to the Unofficials.

By Ed. Seriously, we are grateful for the way we have been looking after by our Chinese friends.

HMS ALBION AND THE CONFEDERATION OF THE CINQUE PORTS

"Those readers who imagine that Sibiu, Kuching, Labuan, Kota Belud and Tawau comprise the Cinque Ports have the editor's sympathy, but in fact, the Confederation who adopted the ship in 1953 have their home slightly nearer the white cliffs of Dover. And this may or may not give you the reason for HMS ALBION's association with the Courts of Brotherhood and Guestling. Anyone born in the shadow of a Martello Tower can tell you that Dover, Hythe, Hastings, Sandwich and Romney are the five Ports, but do not forget the Antient (sic) Towns of Rye and Winchelsea, who are of equal standing with the Cinque Ports, and who confuse the issue by bringing the real total up to seven. Which is just one more feature of medieval history that your logical mind will have difficulty in grasping.

More recent historical records show that Captain Adams attended the Yorkshire and Kent cricket match at Dover on the 20th August 1964 as the guest of the Registrar of the Cinque Ports. One outcome of this was that he caught a cold, but a more lasting result was that by the end of the year each Mayor's parlour in the five Ports sported a framed picture of the ship, personally presented by members of the ship's company on behalf of the ship. As the opening batsmen struggled to reach a century before lunch, plans for the first roulement of the commission were also laid, and on the 29th November 1964 the ship anchored off Dover. Nearly a dozen appropriately garbed Mayors and Mayoresses, plus assorted Aldermen were flown on board by helicopter from the rain drenched landing site at Granville Gardens, and entertained to lunch in the Wardroom before returning to their Kentish longhouses.



Unfortunately the ship's programme has prevented further personal contact with the Brotherhood but we have kept in touch. Not long after sending a telegram of congratulations to the Warden, Sir Winston Churchill, on the occasion of his 90th birthday we heard the sad news of the death of this great man. We next sent a cable to Sir Robert Menzies when he was elected Lord Warden and we were pleased to receive a personal note from him at Christmas. No doubt the forthcoming spell of Home Sea Service in dry dock will provide the next commission with further opportunities for fostering the association and maintaining the link between us before Albion moves East again.

ALBION MERRY-GO-ROUND

"Off caps," ordered the Commander as we stood there at the after end of the Flight Deck sweating on many a Sunday morning after Divisions. "Stand at Ease . . . Stand Easy" to be followed by the melodic tones of an electric organ appearing on the rising after lift - reminiscent of the interval music from such cinemas as the old "Trocadero". Not many of us fainted - doubtless influenced by the salutiferous gaze of our organist.

Afterwards down below we went to enjoy the odd game of Uckers or dominoes or to listen to some taped music over the SRE. Dinner with a good cooling dollop of strawberry ice cream. Marvellous! And now for a bit of fresh air. This air conditioning may be the envy of those ashore - but living in a floating box, many of us do long for the occasional blow through of fresh air.

And so off many of us would go in such breathtaking vehicles as "Margaret" or in one of the 8 Piccolo dinghies or yet again trying to emulate the Eskimaux (was it?) in trying to turn over one of our fibre glass canoes. Skiing behind "Margaret" with her 60 h.p. Evinrude outboard gave us a chance to enjoy this select sport - almost exclusively enjoyed by the millionaire playboy class in Europe we are told. Here was something to remember - even if we did crack the odd rib or - sorry Captain - finger, in our determination to master the skills of slaloming and "one-ski" skiing.

On this same Sunday one would probably find 848 Flight's AA 1 enjoying a quiet beer in the cool open green valley at Bario, waiting for "Quebec" to return from a trip to one of our forward helicopter landing areas. Down off Labuan Island some of the off duty watch would be sitting on the beach near the Combined Services Sailing Centre watching two of their number learning the intricacies of Sub Aqua swimming.

Back onboard 16 rather tired and dusty individuals might be seen climbing up the gangway, having just returned from 2 days of motoring and camping along the South East coastal route of Malaya - once again ALBION's two Minibuses had given some of us a chance to explore into the "beyond" at very little cost.

What is this, you may ask, an ad to "Join the Navy and See the World?" "No, certainly not," I'd reply. It is just a brief description of some of the £3,200 worth of Nuffeld Trust equipment that ALBION now boasts. And as we steam towards the delights of Kobe, there awaiting us, we hope is another ski-boat (this time made in fibre glass) for use by 848 Squadron. No, this is certainly no Ad., but gives as a chance to pay a small tribute to the continual generosity of the Nuffield Trust, who have over the past 4 years bent over backwards to meet ALBION's every plea for help. We even found the Minibuses lying alongside at Portsmouth one day - long before we'd even had formal approval for their purchase. "Thank you" Mrs. Margaret Robinson!



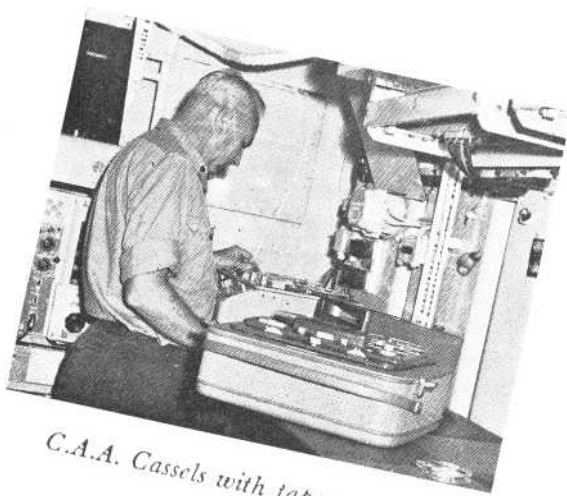
Ski boat in Hong Kong.



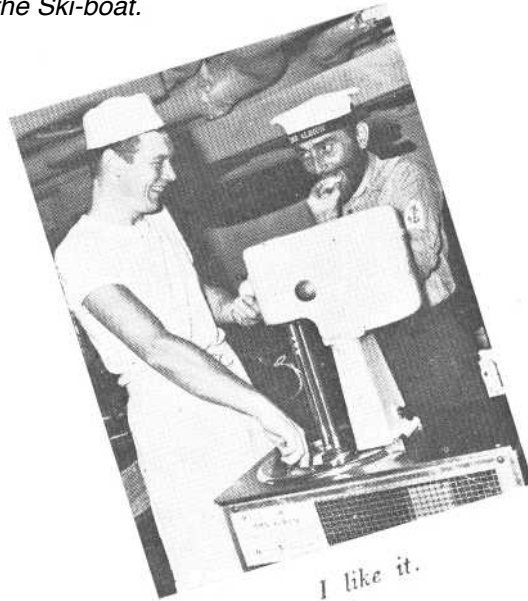
Mini buses in Tsavo Games Park.

*Margaret
Tender To Albion*

Nameplate of the Ski-boat.



C.A.A. Cassels with tape recorder.



I like it.

MILITARY PASSENGERS

ALL through this commission we have experienced variety, but the greatest source of variety has been amongst the passengers themselves. Needless to say we have carried a number of infantry battalions. These include men from the Highlands of Scotland to the Himalayan foothills and from Aden to Australia. Interspersed with the infantry we have carried dogs, goats, a bear and monkeys, to say nothing of Indian, Pakistan, Chinese and Malaysian charwallahs and contractors for these units.

LEST there are those who think we only carry men it would be wise to add a list of some of the types of passenger-machines which have rested on our flight deck or in the hangar. Landrovers, 3 tonners, matador, agricultural tractor, LA guns, 105 mm howitzers, water trailers, water bowsers, Ferret, Austers, Beavers, Single Pioneers, Sioux, Scout, Belvedere, Whirlwind.

BECAUSE all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy we have carried passengers whenever we went anywhere on leave, whether it be for a weekend to Djibouti or Assab or a week at Hong Kong or Kobe. On one trip to Hong Kong there were representatives of 33 different ships and units from all three services. When we went to Kobe we took two bands - on leave - but allowed them to provide official music and ceremony whenever the opportunity arose!

IN retrospect we can list the units we have carried for training, exercises, and in roulements (that magic word that can be adequately described as "relief in the line" by Army phraseology, and "rotation of units" by anyone else).

40 Commando RM	1 Gordon Highlanders
41 Commando RM	1 Scots Guards (included 9 Company Irish Guards)
42 Commando RM	3 Royal Anglians
43 Commando RM	1 Malaysian Infantry Regiment
45 Commando RM	1 Malaysian Rangers
HQ 3 Cdo. Bde. RM	2/2 Ghurka Rifles
95 Cdo. Light Regt. RA	2/10 Ghurka Rifles
97 Cdo. Light Regt. RA	3 Royal Australian Regiment
2 Royal Green Jackets	

ON occasions we have carried passengers whose place of duty coincided with our destination. One officer from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders finished duty with the Federal Army in Aden and rejoined his battalion in Sarawak, having had a door to door service with all his baggage provided by ALBION and 848 Squadron. Others went to Hong Kong, Mombasa, Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore in a more routine manner.

NEARLY all end-of-commission articles end with statistics involving multicircumnavigation of the world with tons of this or length of that. In my article on "passengers" I would like to end of a different note. A note perhaps tinged with slight pangs of regret in that while we were pleased to provide our passengers with the Hotel service that they enjoyed as "passengers" - we were sorry that we never had the opportunity to give them the Battle Services they would have had from every department in the ship had the situation demanded. "Though it is worthy of note that as a cruise liner we have carried over 10,000 (non paying) passengers.

REPLENISHMENT AT SEA

During the present commission we have been very fortunate with the weather during all our replenishments. Even when working up off Portland we managed to find a glimmer of sunshine and a not too angry sea. Since arriving on the Far East Station the weather has been more that kind to us on each occasion of carrying out either liquids or solids R.A.S.

Generally each replenishment has gone quite well and there have been few dramatic moment worthy of record except perhaps one when refuelling F.F.O. from TIDESURGE and the outer trough wire parted on the forward rig. A new wire was quickly passed from TIDESURGE, and amid much applause we saw the First Lieutenant quickly perform a circus act and walk out along the hose to secure it to the trough. Solid replenishments have had their moments, even to the point of attempting to land a load on the back of a passing midshipman.

It would not be fair to conclude these brief notes without a word of thanks to the galley staff for their supplies of cold limers and even more important, the supply of what has become known in ALBION as the R.A.S. Lunch of Fish and Chips and Oggie and Chips, in a bag, of course.

" What day is it Bo?"

" Sunday, of course, we're RAS'ing arn't we?"



VITAL STATISTICS

						This Commission	Last Commission
MILES STEAMED	...	...	...	...	...	86,600	85,111
Number of Liquid RAS	...	...	...	...	...	21	25
TONS	...	...	...	...	...	24,000 tons	25,000 tons
Number of Solids RAS	...	...	...	...	...	9	11
LOADS	...	...	...	...	...	1,400	2,005
RAS of Escorts	...	...	...	...	...	17	3
TONS	...	...	...	...	...	2,500	753

ENTERTAINMENTS

Cinema

Our main source of regular entertainment is provided by the ship's S.R.E. and cinema facilities. The good work of our S.R.E. team is covered elsewhere in the book so here we must acknowledge the splendid service given by E.A. Gilby and his team of cinema operators - the main stalwarts being P(O) Elec Eastall, PO ME Freegard, LEM Bailey, Ldg Sea Smith and EM Inshaw. They have screened some 1850 shows during the commission with a remarkably low failure record.

Coach Tours

Also in the area of general entertainment comes the coach tour organisation run by the "Bish", Rev. Courtney Atkins. Coach loads of "ALBIONS" complete with bag meal and two cans of beer apiece have been around the "best places". Main tours were at Gibraltar, where the entire resources of the local bus company were exhausted in coping - with the "Round the Rock" tours; Mombasa tours of the Tsavo Game Reserve, where plenty of big and small game was seen and photographed: Hong Kong and the New Territories and a glimpse of Red China; Singapore to Lambong Falls and Kurkup village; and most notable, in Kobe, where 650 Ship's Company members went on tours to Nara: Kyoto and Himaji.

Tombola

We must also remember the tombola team under Lt. Jack Stone who have "shaken up" and "eyes downed" for us to the extent that the total takings so far this commission have been £5,913 : 14s and have contributed to the Welfare Fund no less than £292 : 11s.

Commission Highlights

The commission was got off to a good start with the Ship's Company Commissioning Dance held at the Savoy Ballroom, Southsea on 19th November 1964 with an attendance of 750.

During the passage of the Suez Canal the traditional "gully gully" man was brought on board, at small expense, and he performed with "cups and chicks" to good effect on the Flight Deck. At Aden in March 1965 we were lucky enough to get on board the C.S.E. show- starring Clinton Forbes. This was our first live show and the performance was a great success - as was the party afterwards!

At the Equator on 13th April 1965 we enjoyed the visit of King (AB Moore) Neptune and his Judge (Lt Cdr Stanley), Princess (LPM Bloomfield) and Barbers (RPO Maiden and Shpt. Collings). They commanded us to accept and withstand "The full and due initiation into the Rites of our Ancient Aquatic Court" and there was a little accepting and a lot of withstanding for those singled out.

Our first children's party was given at Jesselton on the 6th August 1965 for 150 Asian children. The number that turned up bore no relation to the number invited and Surg. Lt. Swann and his merry hand of pirates and helpers had their hands full with about 400 kids charging about and enjoying themselves immensely.

The Entertainers and Concert Party achieved a great success with the "Variety R.O.7 - 65" which played to full houses in the hangar, and for two nights ashore in the Naval Base, Singapore. Produced by CPO(A) Blair/PO Elec Beveridge, compere ERA Williams, and featuring amongst many other first class turns, the "Corps de Ballet" and supported by our own group, the Harmaniacs, it was registered as a "hit".

The children's Christmas Party given at Singapore on the 23rd December for 100 underprivileged children sponsored by the Hans Anderson Club was organised by Sub Lt Peter Waffles who was supported by an enthusiastic band of pirates and helpers. The highlight was the arrival of Father (Sub Lt Wintie) Christmas, built in just the right form for the job, and who was just saved from melting away in his costume by a "nick of time" refreshment.

A Christmas Carol Concert for large numbers of Naval Base and Fleet guests, and attended by the Commander-in-Chief, was held on the Flight Deck on Christmas Eve 1965. The Naval Base Choir, suitably illuminated, led the singing of the old traditional carols.

A major effort by the Entertainers, led by Chief Elec Rowe, was the Ship's Company Dance held in HMS TERROR gymnasium on 9th April 1966. The gym was suitably decorated (Fuji scene and all) bars and refreshment tents erected, and at 2200 over 1,000 attenders were estimated. They drank £400 worth of drinks and ate 800 salads and masses of curry. Compared by PO Martin and LAM Grant, our principal guest was the Captain of HMS TERROR, Captain R. Plugge and his lady.

Our final children's party was given at Kobe on 23rd May 1966 for 200 orphan children. The weather just held for Lt. Wailes and his band of clowns, pirates and helpers, and a happy band of children left clutching hats, sweets and balloons to testify to the good work of all, not least the cookery and catering staff.

During the commission the Entertainers have run two raffles so far for a local worthy cause - the Naval Base Charity Chest, raising £109 in 1965 and £81 10s in 1966. Yet to come before ending the commission will, it is hoped, be another Concert Party produced by Ch Elec Beveridge, and of course a return appearance of the "gully gully" man as we go back the other way.

The record would not be complete without mention of others of the Entertainers who have supported the Entertainment Officers, Commanders Holgate and Hack throughout the commission, they are: Lt. Norman Stead, CPO Blair, CAA Cassell, COY Palfrey, CPO Wtr. Conway, PO McAuley, Ldg Sea Crouch, LEM Tasker, POM(E) Vernon, M(E) Cameron, LMA Kay, MA Sullivan, SA Southouse, NA Dean, LRO Dewhurst-and the Regulating Staff who took all those lists of names.



Christmas Party in Singapore.



Party at Kobe.

THE KILIMANJARO EXPEDITION

A party of nine made an attempt on the "Roof of Africa" during our second visit to Mombasa. The expedition had suffered from so many frustrations beforehand that we feared it would never get off the ground and it was not, in fact, until after we had left the Seychelles - a mere two days out from Mombasa - that we finally received the "all clear". In those two days and the two which followed we made all the arrangements for food, equipment, frontier clearance and transport, finally tumbling into the overnight bus to Himo which left Mombasa at 2130 on 27th November. After a bone-shaking ride of over six hours duration ("first class" seats made absolutely no difference to anything except our purses) we emerged in total darkness and settled down to sleep on the concrete pavement in front of a row of shops. We awoke to find ourselves the objects of interest to the local population - human and animal - but we didn't mind this for it was a beautiful day and we were at once rewarded with a magnificent view of the mountain. It turned out to be by far the best view we had of it at all!

An obliging minibus went sufficiently far off its normal route to take us right to our base camp - the Kibo Hotel. We had tents with us but it took little persuasion by the hotel manager for us to make the hotel our base and also to make use of the mountain huts for our overnight accommodation on the ascent. Even without tents we started with a first-day load of as much as 70 lbs to a man, though this was reduced considerably as we dumped food and equipment en route. A meal at the hotel, a last contact with hot water, a hasty re-packing of our gear and we were on our way.

No climbing is required on the main peak of Kilimanjaro, but it is a long hard slog which demands considerable stamina. We carried all our own gear, spurning the use of porters. Nor did we employ a guide, the leader having considerable mountaineering experience. The vertical height which we had to climb was reduced of course, by the height of our base above sea level - about 5,000 feet, but, even so, the three stages to the last hut are gruelling; to this is added, in the summit stage, the hazards of mountain sickness.

The first day took us to the Mandara Hut at 9,500 feet, by way of a rough jeep track mainly through tropical rain forest. The day was grillingly hot, the night pleasantly cool. Both in the evening and the morning we enjoyed panoramic views. We ate and slept well.

We were able to dump a quantity of food and equipment at this hut, making the second day a little easier. The track, now only a footpath, lay at first through woodland but soon emerged from the trees into grassy savannah from which we had tantalising views of the mountain. Horombo Hut again afforded us distant views over the inland plateau of East Africa. At 12,500 feet we found our appetite jaded and sleep was less easy. The night was distinctly chilly and we were glad of additional clothing in our wooden bunks.

More food and equipment was dumped here for the return and we set out on the third morning on quite the most disheartening part of the journey. Our route lay at first through gently rounded shoulders of the outlying flanks of Mawenzi, the lesser twin peaks of Kilimanjaro, emerging on to a saddle at 14,000 feet. So far so good. But between us and the white speck which was Kibo Hut some 7½ miles away at 15,500 feet lay a plateau of laval dust and gravel, dotted with boulders. Level though most of this was, height began to tell and most of us were going very slowly, suffering in varying degrees from headaches and "mountaineer's foot" - a reluctance to put one in front of the other. The usual time for this stage is 5 hours, but we found that it took some of us as much as eight. We had only fleeting glimpses of the mountain all day, and at times the clouds were sweeping right over the plateau. We had left behind all signs of wild life and we felt very cut off in this eerie world of silence and shadows. Only at the very last, as the sun was setting, did we really see the summit of the mountain with its awesome ice-cap glistening green and blue. Two of the party were by now suffering acutely from mountain sickness and two others from exhaustion. Few of us felt any inclination to eat, and sleep came only with difficulty. It was very cold and we were all shivering in spite of the extra clothing we all wore.

It is usual to start from the hut for the final stage of the ascent at about 0200. This allows one to arrive at the summit in time to see the sun rise, gives crisp snow conditions and also prevents one from becoming discouraged by the apparently slow rate of progress. In the event, five of us made a start shortly after 0400, the remainder wisely electing to return from the hut. Our progress was very slow and we were all affected in varying degrees by the altitude. The whole of this stage is on scree and for every two steps taken upwards one can rely on slipping back the distance of one of them. Cloud still covered the summit and it was obvious that we were going to be denied both the sun-rise and also the dramatic views of and from the summit crater which are the major rewards of making the ascent. However, we did have one unpremeditated and utterly unforgettable sight, that of the recently discovered Ikeya-Seki comet which rose about an hour and a half before the sun and which carved a scimitar of brilliance vertically

across the night sky, silhouetted against and then rising above the black outline of Mawenzi before being lost in the grey light of dawn. We were just below a dense blanket of cloud at this point - had we set out earlier we would have seen nothing of the comet. At about 1030 we crawled - almost literally - the last few feet to Gilman's Point, one of the two "official" summit points of the main peak of Kilimanjaro, just on 19,000 feet. Beyond us lay the ice-filled crater of the mountain, but visibility was reduced by cloud and driving snow to a matter of yards. Our only reward was to be the satisfaction of having reached the top. We decided not to attempt the crater walk - we would have gained nothing by doing so and it would have taken well over three hours to complete in the prevailing conditions. So we signed the visitors' book, took photographs and - because just in time the leader of the party remembered that it was his 46th birthday, 31st October - sang rather breathlessly

Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday dear Bishop,
Happy birthday to you.

Then we turned our backs on the mountain and began the long hard haul of some 15 miles on top of what we had already done to Horombo Hut. We made this as daylight was failing and gratefully accepted all the help that the other four were able to give us. They were largely, if not completely, recovered from their high-altitude sickness by this time.

The last day on the mountain was another of unrelieved hard work as we made our way first to Mandara Hut to pick up the last of our food and to cook a meal, and then to the hotel where the unreal atmosphere of luxury awaited us. One hot bath followed another, interspersed with ice-cold showers; then came the bliss of clean clothes, an easy chair by a log fire, a dinner which at any time would have been delicious but which was indescribably so now, and finally drinks around the fire to round off the evening.

How we would all have loved to have spent at least one more day at the hotel, not only for the sake of the comfort it offered but also for the delightful climate and splendid views it enjoys. But we had to be on our way early for another comfortless 'bus ride to Mombasa.

Was it worth it, in spite of the unrewarding weather conditions? Speaking for myself, yes, every time. Pride of achievement is always a good spur to a mountaineer, of course, but achievement plus companionship counts for much more, and this we had.

As I write, we are just 24 hours out of Kobe. Fuji, here we come! There's no curing some people, is there?

The expedition:

P.O., D. C. E. Harper, R.P.O. 1). A. Maiden, L.E.M. J. M. Rowland, N.A.M. C. J. Symes
MNE M. R. Gill, MIDSHIPMAN R. G. Bryan, MIDSHIPMAN S. L. Platts, LT. M. I.
Burnett, CHAPLAIN A. C. Atkin

THE PENANG HILTON

"**XRAY ROMEO XRAY ROMEO** this is HILTON HILTON, Radio Check, over".

"HILTON this is XRAY ROMEO, loud and clear now, over".

"This is HILTON - good - how about this bump - we ordered 500 rolls and with the army restricted to one roll per man per month things are getting desperate - over".

"This is XRAY ROMEO - relax - 500 rolls in transit by hand of officer today - over".

"HILTON Roger - thank goodness - nothing more for you - over".

"XRAY ROMEO - Roger - closing down - have fun - out".

Thus another day at the Penang Hilton starts. By this time, 0915, the majority of the 200 or so guests have finished their breakfasts although the odd one or two decided to miss theirs and have a relaxing forenoon in bed, followed by breakfast at the bar at a more civilized time.

An hour later forty fit and sunburnt sailors can be seen boarding a bus, armed with picnic lunches prepared by the staff and equipped with bathing things, they head off for a sightseeing trip of the island which will embrace temples, (snakes or otherwise), dams and the bathing beaches. In the meantime excitement is reaching fever pitch as battle is joined with the Minden wives on the softball pitch. The strain is clearly too much for some who make a snap decision and retire to their beds to await the opening of the bar.

Today is the day of the swimming gala and at the appointed time more Minden wives - an athletic looking bunch - gather at the pool side, together with naval competitors and spectators. After a certain degree of argument, a number of the latter are pressed into service as competitors. The races start and by judicious application of stringent rules and many disqualifications the wives win by one point. Prizes are presented - beer for the wives and nutty for the runners up - and later most repair to the bar.

The arduous day wears on, and to avoid the guests contracting bed sores a barbecue is arranged for the evening at which a group from the Green jackets band provides music, the staff prepare gourmets' delights over charcoal braziers and much beer is consumed.

As midnight approaches the sounds of revelry diminish and the weary guests head towards their beds to prepare for another day of what they will.

Author's Note: The above of course did not in fact all happen on the same day. Generally the idea of the camp was received by the ship's company, particularly the more senior members, with mixed feelings. The journey up to Penang was long, tiring and uncomfortable. However, once the journey was over, almost all enjoyed the camp immensely and many said they considered it one of the highlights of the commission.

THE HARMANIACS

Whilst not rivalling the Mersyside insect group, the Harmaniacs may none the less claim to have been one of the more widely travelled water-borne rock groups of the present decade. Starting with a handful of sticky chords in the hot summer of 1964, the group presented a fair imitation of a portable electrical store by the end of the year, and since then have contributed a generous share of nocturnal decibels in places as far removed as Aden and Hong Kong, Singapore and Mombasa.



"The Sound Producers"

The group's first wax impression for use on jet age phonographs (known as a 'disc' to avant garde rockers), also happened to be their last, notwithstanding, it made the 'charts' if not a fortune. Incidentally, to correct a popular misconception, the hit side is named "Something called Nothing" and not "Nothing called Something".

You may have heard the group play on the flight deck, or perform at the ship's concert party, and you possibly lost an hour or two's sleep as they polished the latest composition. You might even have fallen flat on your face as you tripped over a wandering lead or an errant amplifier, but whatever your encounter with the group may have been, all will agree that they made their mark and will be remembered for a variety of reasons.

ALBION BROADCASTING CENTRE

In October 1964, eight volunteers met in the SRE studio to plan the ship's future broadcast entertainment. The SRE Officer was put in overall charge, CAA(O) Cassell was made programme controller and six operators completed the team. Almost our first decision was to call ourselves the "Albion Broadcasting Centre" since we felt this title to be more inspiring than "The SRE".

We determined to provide as many home produced programmes as possible on Channel `A' and to supplement these by using BBC Transcriptions of old favourites. To provide an alternative programme Channel `B' was used to relay broadcasting stations like the BBC World Service, Radio Australia, British Forces Broadcasts Service (Far East) etc. To cater for the younger element on board our programmes contained a large content of "pop" music but we tried hard to provide something for everybody. "Tuesday Quiz" with its cash prizes, "Albion News and Topics", "Personal Choice", "Classical Corner", "All that jazz" and "Take it with a Pinch" soon became favourites and no doubt we would have had other successes had we had as much support as advice!



The Senior Operator "Tug" Wilson

"Mess Choice" and "Ship's Requests" run by our much over-worked senior operator (what would we have done without him?) were two more favourites but, no doubt, our biggest success and most popular programme was "Home Requests". At the time of going to press over 540 requests from relatives and friends had been received and played. It is also estimated that by the time the ship sails through the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour some 50 "Tuesday Quiz" programmes will have been broadcast and over 100 visitors and ship personalities will have been interviewed.

Talking of interviews, "Albion News and Topics" gave us many memorable meetings with unforgettable people. People like COMFEF, COMAF, the Commanding Officers of the RM

Commandos and Army Regiments we had on board; Captain Bartlett-Prince of Hong Kong (who well remembers the Albion of 1900!); Lieutenant Osborne (who was a mercenary in the Belgian Congo before joining the Royal Navy); Tommy Steele's brother, Roy Hicks; Bill Gasson of Reuter and many others. After the interviews we had with reporters of the "Portsmouth Evening News" and the "Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham News" we also got some advertisement ourselves in those papers and as a result were flooded by letters and requests from home!

Our most notable achievement? Undoubtedly the link up with the Aden Forces Broadcasting Association when requests for friends ashore were played by us and A.F.B.A. played requests for us on board. That was the only time we broadcast to a community ashore but we also had several inter-ship quizzes.

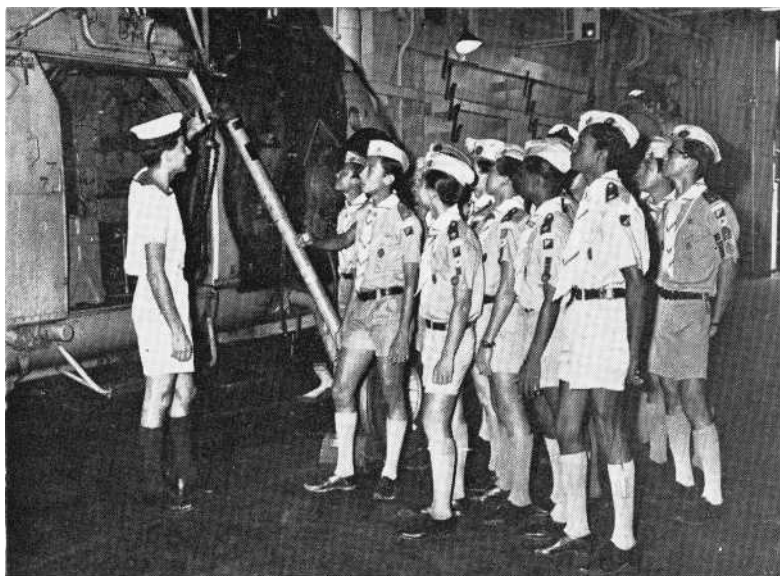
Many of our operators gave up through lack of spare time or because the job was too trying. However, we thank them all, especially CAA Cassell (who for all his work never received any money) and NA Wilson who were selfless and untiring. To end we would say that most ships have their SREs but we would like to think that the ABC is superior to most of them. Conceited or not, we think it is.

(Editor's note - "So do the rest of us.")

DEEP SEA SCOUTS

This smallest, but surely most-travelled, branch of the Scout movement, has been represented in Albion by a small but active crew. It is most fitting that the present commission should have co-incided with the Movement's "World Friendship Year" for we could have had no finer opportunity to meet and to get to know Scouts of other countries than has been offered by our travels of the last eighteen months. From the swarming metropolis of Hong Kong to a remote Dyak longhouse in the depth of the Borneo jungle, two days' journey by long boat from the nearest town, from points as far apart as Gibraltar and Jesselton, Kobe and Mombasa, we have enjoyed the hospitality of an uncounted number of our brother Scouts.

In return we have received them on board ship and, when our stay has been long enough, assisted in the running of their weekly Troop meetings and of their camps. Most of all, however, we have enjoyed and benefited from our personal contacts with Scouts of so many different races. These have given us unrivalled opportunities to experience the depth of meaning of the fourth Scout Law - "A Scout is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout, no matter to what country, class or creed the other may belong". We hope that, as a result of these many and varied contacts, the ties of world friendship have been strengthened and even that the prospects of future peace for the world have been made a little brighter.



Our brother scouts.

SHIP'S ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL



The Association Football Team and Officials.

"They came, they saw, they conquered." These were the words used by the Sabah Times football reporter to describe "Those men of Albion" in his match report on the 6th August 1965, after the ship's first eleven had defeated the State of Sabah by three goals to two at Jesselton. This was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the commission for the ship's footballers and selectors as our team was in splendid form on this occasion. The feature of the game, according to the Sabah Times reporter was, "The superb football, excellent passing and great teamwork displayed by the Albion players".

There have been many other equally exciting matches, over sixty of them in fact, and it is not for any one person to say which was the most skilful, or thrilling - or whatever you like - because our first eleven have given so many fine displays during the commission. Only a brief outline of their travels and achievements can be given in this article, but here is their record:-

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals For	Goals Against
62	40	6	16	217	142

All ship's supporters and football enthusiasts will appreciate the tremendous team effort that goes into achieving forty wins from sixty two games played and the energy and skill that goes into scoring over two hundred goals whilst your defence only allows the opposition to get the upper hand on sixteen occasions. These statistics surely indicate what a fine bunch of footballers we have had in Albion this commission and it is no wonder that they have built such a very good reputation in and around the Singapore Naval Base for their entertaining displays under the Terror floodlights.

Many will remember our opening game in Singapore, for it was regarded as one of the most exciting and keenly contested matches seen on the Terror No. 1 ground in months. We took on a very fit and experienced Bulwark team and only went down to them 5 goals to 3 after a tremendous struggle. Later on, as our players became more used to the conditions, we started to show our true form and very soon we had recorded good wins over a number of local service and civilian teams. These included HM Ships, Terror, Triumph, Ark Royal; Royal Air Force Stations Tengah and Seletar; the Dockyard F.C. and H.Q. 3rd Commando Brigade, to name but a few.

We became Fleet Champions, officially, on the 18th July 1965, when we defeated RNAS Simbang by 6 goals to 1 in a challenge match for the Berthon Cup.

This was the forerunner of many exciting Berthon Cup matches which were to be seen at the Terror ground and a good number of our company will remember and appreciate the excellent entertainment laid on by the ship's footballers - win or lose. A mention also of the tremendous support given to this first eleven by our Supporters club, particularly the Seaman's Vocal Group, led by A.B.s Wollacott and Sheppard.

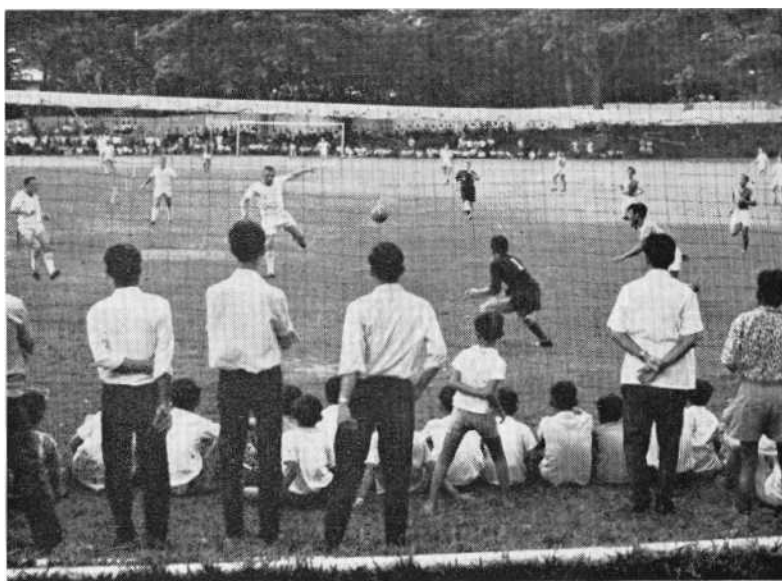


The Supporters Club.

As can be seen, the ship's team have travelled far and met a wide variety of teams. On our second visit to Hong Kong we are proud to record that we became the first R.N. team to defeat the Hong Kong Police F.C. It was a close struggle but we delighted the Chinese crowd by holding on to our lead to win the game 4 - 3.

The article would not be complete without a mention of the players, officials, selectors, ball boys, and other personalities, who have been part of the Albion Football Club. Unfortunately, several of our original team have left the ship but who could forget those excellent displays of ball control and shooting by our dashing left winger, Midshipman Gilbertson. He was a great asset to Albion and also of course to the Royal Navy Singapore team.

The ship has been very fortunate in having such fine players as A. B. Craigs, L/Sea Gillman (present team captain) and A. B. Harrison, throughout the commission. A better half back line would be hard to find and all three have represented the R.N. Singapore, also, for the record, all three have had spells as Albion's team captain. Leading the attack we had the legendary L.R.O. Trumper: Scorer of eleven hat-tricks and with a total of 66 goals. He was a great personality on and off the field. Our two regular inside forwards have been N.A. Heaton and A.B. Curl. What grand players they have been. Always giving of their best and laying on or scoring goals themselves. Some of the finest goals of the commission in fact were scored by N.A. Heaton and out of his total of 41 he has notched up five hat tricks. What about our full backs? Both E.M. Barkley and A.B. Mann are ever presents. Like the others mentioned above they lined up for our very first fixture. No team could wish for a pair of steadier full backs and with Barkley's dash and Mann's excellent distribution, which incidently gained him a place in the Navy Team, we have seen some first class full-back play.



Trumper has a go.

R.E.M. Archer, E.R.A. Old, and N.A. Clarkson. Newcomers to the first eleven during the commission were:- Sub Lieutenant McDonald, A.B. Yandell, M.E. Kirkpatrick, M.N. Parnell and Cook Cardwell. Deserving mention too are all the players who have represented the ship's Second Eleven and Under Twenties side, but this would entail writing a book if all their activities were to be recorded. However both teams have had their share of fun and successes, here now are their statistics:-

Second Eleven (Team Manager, C.P.O.S.A.(V) Dawson)

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals For	Goals Against
22	12	3	7	83	46

Under Twenties Eleven (Team Manager A.B. Craigs)

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals For	Goals Against
19	14	1	4	84	34



C.M.(E) Beard officiates.

The last line of defence has probably caused the selectors (and spectators at times) the most concern and nail-biting. No less than ten different goalkeepers have been tried during the commission but each time a "star" was found he seemed to be detailed for draft soon afterwards.

Many will remember the safe and workmanlike displays of R.S. Jarrold between the sticks and the spectacular feats of L.A. Archbold. Our first choice for the last fifteen games (at the time of writing) has been Cook Anderson. What a fine young goalkeeper he has turned out to be since his first game in Hong Kong on our second visit. With good positional sense, agility and safe handling he has the attributes of a top class goalkeeper.

Our loyal reserves deserve special mention. Players who have attended games as substitutes are;

Before closing this brief account, it is fitting to record a special "thank you" to the personalities who have formed the main-spring of the Albion Football Club, indeed many of our players have requested that this should be done if possible.

C.P.O. J. Glynn, P.T.I., our first eleven team coach and selector throughout his two and a half years in Albion has been a tower of strength to ship's football. He, together with C.M.(E) Beard, can recall the very first ship's matches when we stood on the line in Portsmouth and peered through the mist and rain. C.M.(E) Beard has also been a member of the Selection committee but is probably better known for his refereeing and the excellent way in which he has done the job of Football Referees' Appointments Secretary in Albion. Many of our younger officials have much to thank him for. Finally, C.P.O.S.A.(V) Dawson and A.B. Craigs. Both have done a splendid job in running the Second Eleven and Under Twenties, respectively, they have also assisted greatly with team selection and organising generally within the Football Club. It has been a great pleasure to have had such a fine Management Committee.

CRICKET

The first thing you notice about ALBION's cricketers is their strong right arms, developed through throwing in from the deep you might think, but no they came by them lifting pints and throwing darts.

If pushed we can also play a fair game of cricket as we have five players who have represented the Navy in Singapore; LT. CDR. Peter Drake, ERA Date Stracy, ERA Ralph Pratt, Midshipman Keith Ridland and Midshipman Doug Littlejohns. Peter Drake who left us in April was cricket sec. during his time in ALBION and is a great loss to the side. He is the only all-rounder I know who comes from Yorkshire, wears an Australian cap and speaks Welsh!

At one stage in the commission we played consecutive games in Labuan, the Seychelles, Mombasa and Hong Kong, which puts us in the same class as the M.C.C. as touring cricketers, but for distance travelled only!

The whole team will agree that the game against the Hong Kong Cricket Club, on the most valuable ground in the world, was the highlight so far this commission. We came very close to winning only going down by some 20 odd runs, this after we dropped one of their batsmen before he scored and 8 times after he made 84, which bears out the old saying "Hold your catches and you will win your matches". We have held some first class catches, Dick Old's at Labuan was, I think, the best and Chippy Tillman's at the Seychelles the best try as he got a hand to the ball only to disappear off the pitch into six feet of water!

Some of our most enjoyable games have been against the Combined Services at Labuan, we have played them three times, winning one and losing the other two. We hope to square the account on the way back from Japan.

Thanks to the support cricket is now getting in the ship we have started a second XI which will be in full swing during the season.

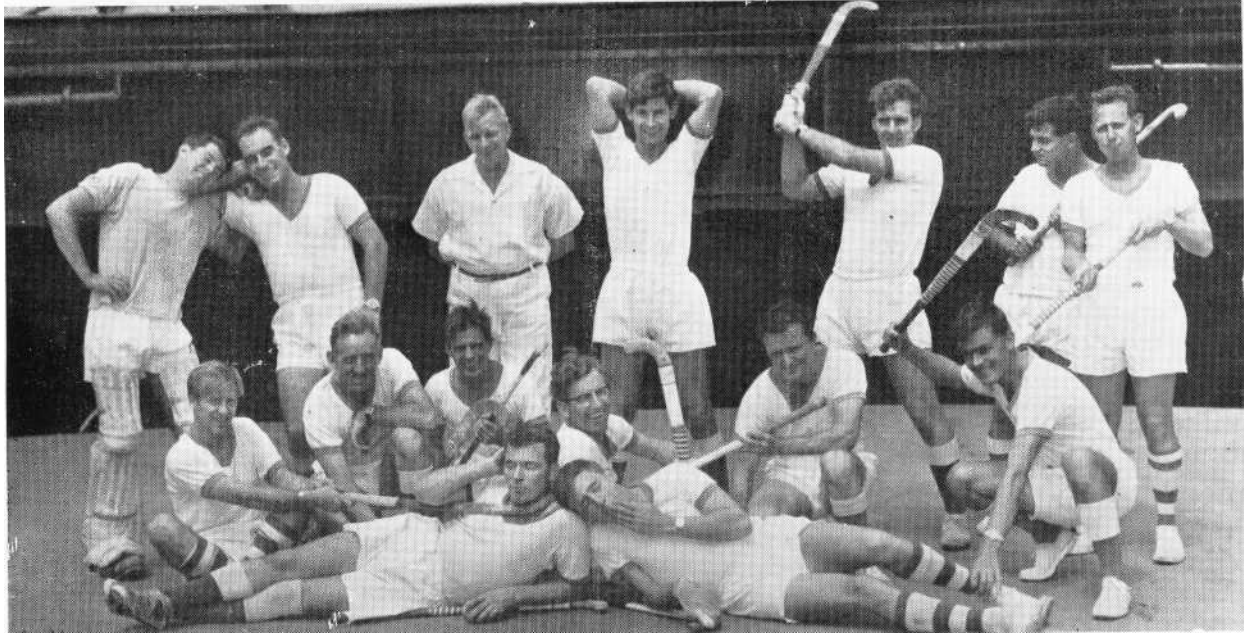
The inter-part knockout Cup last August was well supported, the C.P.O.s beating the Wardroom in the final, this cup will be played for again in June.

Finally because cricket is a game to be enjoyed on and off the pitch and taking part is more important than winning or losing I'm not going to publish a list of results, but we did win more than we lost!

The following have played for the first XI:-

Lt. Cdr. Drake	Lt. Cdr. Furse	Lt. Pulford	Lt. Osbourne
S/LT. Watts	S/LT. Budd	ERA Old	Mid. Ridland
Mid. Littlejohns	Mid. Bannerman	Shpt Kelley	Shpt Lewis
ERA Pratt	Shpt Tillman	AB Woolacott	LA Wright
PO Blakeborough	CERA Fisher	S/LT. Hasler	RAE Stracy
LS Taylor	LM(E) Thomson		

HOCKEY 1964 - 1966



The commission has seen the standard of hockey go from strength to strength and we can now be reasonably confident of giving a good account of ourselves against any opposition; in Japan against Tenri University (alleged to be the best team in the West of Japan) we lost 7 - 1, but were not overwhelmed or disgraced. By the time Pompey is reached in September the record should read something like:-

P.- 80; W.- 55; Drawn - 10; Lost - 15; Goals for - 250. Against - 100.

EA Fairhurst will undoubtedly be the top scorer with about 80 goals followed by L.SEA Crouch 35, Lt. Brown and Shpt Crampton 25, Mne Wellburn 20 and PO (Phot) Robinson 15. Congratulations too to REA Walker, Lt. Brown and ERA Lewis all of whom have had representative games for the NAVY on the Far East.

To mention everyone who has played for the ship would take too long so let it suffice to cover the 16 most regular players:-

L.S.A. Longden (Goal) - Always safe and can be relied on to give a solid capable and sometimes spectacular performance. Rated one of the best goalies on the Station.

L.Sea Crouch (Right Back) -Started the commission as a centre forward where he scored a lot of goals and then moved back to cover a gap in the defence. Here he has been most successful but I think he would like to get up front again.

Lt. Cdr. Fiddes (Left Back) - A staunch robust player who will always do his best to cut short a menacing attack. Is often found lurking near the opposition D during attacks, very occasionally with success.

ERA Lewis (Right Half) - "They shall not pass" is his motto and he always lives up to it. Very rarely do even two opponents get past him and he has been one of the most valuable members of the side throughout.

REA Waller (Centre Half) - "Team Captain and a great asset to hockey in the ship, not only the 1st XI. A very good centre half who holds the team together, has played inside forward but it is in the centre of the field that he excels.

Marine Wellburn (Left Half) - "Never say die". He must be the hardest trier in the ship, always worrying the opposition and frequently saving a dangerous situation. A good link man who has scored some excellent opportunist goals.

Rev. Atkin (Defence) - Our "cover" for all the back and half back positions, he has rendered some sterling service and when not playing gives much encouragement as a spectator and stand by umpire.

Shpt. Crampton (Right Wing) - Always steady with occasional flashes of brilliance, he is another regular who always gives of his best. At times he surprises us all with his speed and sometimes surprises the opposition with his goals.

Mr. Fish (Inside Right) - A civilian in a ship's side - disgraceful! - All I can say is I wish he'd been with us longer. A "class" player who has helped the forward line and the side in general enormously.

EA Fairhurst (Centre Forward) - If you want a goal "give it to Jim". If he'd played from the first game his tally of goals would probably top 100. Not only a sharpshooter but also a centre forward who holds his line together.

PO (Phot) Robinson (Inside Left) - Started in defence and then moved to the forward line where he has scored some good goals. Unfortunately dogged by injury (and frequently sailing) has not been available as much as we'd have liked.

PO EL(A) Warr (Inside Forward) - A Cornish county player of neat stick work and a devastating shot who unfortunately left the ship early and also spent half his time ashore in Borneo.

EA(Air) Austerberry (Inside Forward) - A squadron player with a wealth of experience, he too has been available for too short a time thanks to injury and duty ashore in Borneo. A most useful player to have in the side.

POAF O'Callaghan (Anywhere) - He must be the keenest player in the side and would play 10 times a week if given the chance. Has vastly improved since joining the ship and when not playing for the ship has done valuable work running the 2nd XI and turning them into a useful side.

Midshipman Hoffman (Inside or Outside Left) - A powerful player and a valuable asset to any side, ALBION no exception. Another "general purpose" forward, he positions himself well and has scored some well taken goals.

Lt. Brown R.M. (Outside Left) - A corps player who on his day could turn the tide for any side. His pin point centres come crashing across the circle and he has scored many fine goals from even finer angles.



But the hockey we have played has not been just the 1st XI. The 2nd XI has had some good games, two interpart knock-out competitions have been played and one day devoted to six a side. The ship ran a most popular and successful six a side competition in Mombasa where the locals were too good for us. In the Fleet six a sides we reached the semi final and lost there to the eventual winners, EAGLE. Yes we've enjoyed our hockey and so must end with a word of thanks to Chief Cook Palmer who has spent hours of his time umpiring nearly all our fixtures.

Playing away!

SAILING

In Portsmouth, whilst the ship was still firmly on the dock blocks and the Dockyard workers were busily trying to get it to look something like a Commando Ship again, the "New Commission" sailing enthusiasts got together and formed the nucleus of the Albion Sailing Team. We had returned our old R.N.S.A. 14 ft. dinghies to store, had not yet got our allocation of Bosun Dinghies but had our Piccolos. We were virtually a sailing club without boats planning for the sailing which would undoubtedly be available on the Far East Station. The Sailing Committee, formed in those early days, laid the foundations for our sailing throughout the commission and have been largely instrumental in keeping it going so well.

In September 1964 P.O. (Phot) Robinson got us off to a flying start when he won the Royal Navy Individual Firefly Championship, and in so doing he set the standard to be aimed at in the following two years.

The trials and work-up days kept most people too busy to have much time for sailing, however we had one interlude at Gibraltar when we raced the R.A.F. in their Albacores, and beat them. By the time we sailed from Portsmouth for the Far East our Bosun dinghies had arrived, but apart from the occasional sail at Aden and Mombasa there was not much opportunity to become accustomed to them on the trip out.

When we reached Singapore it quickly became obvious that we had a nucleus of helmsmen of a good standard, well backed up by a fairly large group of enthusiasts keen to learn, and it was at Singapore that we settled down to what was to become 16 months of really enjoyable sailing.

Singapore Naval Base is blessed with having all the requirements for a sailing paradise, a warm climate, a large number of boats at the Fleet Sailing Centre, and the Naval Base Sailing Club (or the Red House as it is more popularly known) for the customary race post-mortems at the bar. The one requirement it does not have is a steady breeze from a steady direction, however one cannot have everything, and the fact that the wind may change strength and direction two or three times during a race certainly adds spice to the racing.



The Red House.

Our arrival at Singapore was at a time when the fortunes of the Fleet Sailing Centre and the Naval Base Club were at a particularly low ebb. The R.N.S.A. 14 ft. dinghy, which had given such splendid service for so many years (and for which many of us still have a soft spot) had been phased out of the racing programme at a time when there were insufficient Bosun dinghies to replace it. As a result it was not uncommon in those days to see only three Bosuns come to the starting line - and they were all ALBION! However, as the number of Bosuns on the Station increased, so the fortunes of the F.S.G. and N.B.S.C. improved, and at the Fleet Regatta in February of this year there were 33 Bosuns on the line surely a healthy sign for the future.

We soon settled down to enjoy the sailing life in Singapore, and were quickly made to feel at home, for this we are most grateful to Commander Fitzgerald, RN, Vice-Chairman of the Fleet Sailing Committee, and to the committee members of the N.B.S.C. who went out of their way to help us in every way possible. There have been races almost every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday that we have been in Singapore, and not only has ALBION always been well represented, but one or other of our helmsmen have won the majority of these races.

Apart from the racing, Singapore is a pleasant spot for ban-yans, and although in the latter half of the commission there have been a number of small ban-yans and cruises down to Pulau Ubin and Seletar, perhaps the reason for this general pottering not being more popular is the rather dampening effect of the occasional shower of rain! Piccolo sailing has not been too well supported either, possibly because there have always been so many other boats available, but the half dozen or so enthusiasts who have made the effort have thoroughly enjoyed this particularly exciting form of sailing, and it has been a pleasant sight to see these little craft scudding across the water.

We held our first inter-part ship's regatta at Singapore in August 1965 and were fortunate in having a bright sunny day with a reasonable breeze. The inter-part team trophy was won by a comfortable margin by the Air and Air Engineering Departments, but on such a day the result was not as important as the fact that we succeeded in getting more than 60 members of the ship's company onto the water for a sail. The day had its amusing incidents, and some of us are still wondering if Doctor Beckingham's spectacular base over apex gybe was due to his natural liking for water, or simply that there is a limit to the size of man that can be forced into a G.P. 14.



The Bosun Fleet.

From the ship's point of view the two highlights of our competitive sailing have undoubtedly been the Fleet Regattas held at Singapore in September 1965 and February 1966. On both occasions we won the Littleton Cup for inter-ship team racing and the Cock of the Fleet Trophy; in addition, on the first occasion our helmsmen won 3 of the 5 other trophies raced for, and on the second 4 of the 5. Also in the second Regatta our "B" team were runners-up to the "A" team in the Littleton Cup. Our outstanding success in the second Regatta was due largely to the fact that we were able to put so many good helmsmen onto the water. On each day of the Regatta we had more than 20 entries for the various races. It is also only fair to add that by this stage we had considerably more experience in handling Bosuns, and in the local conditions, than any other ship on the Station.



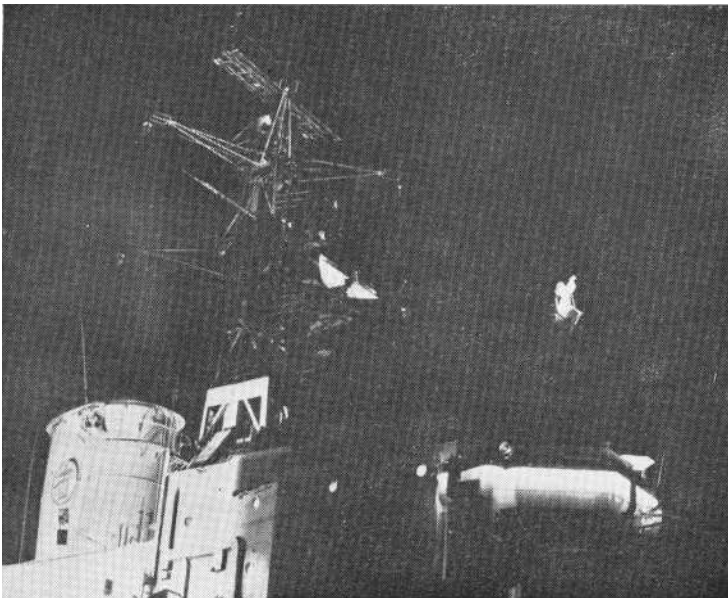
Inter-part Regatta.

The sailing team has raced in team races at Gibraltar, Aden, Mombasa, Hong Kong, Jesselton, Labuan and of course most frequently at Singapore, we have not

always won but I think all who have taken part will agree that it has always been enjoyable sport. The regular team members have been P.O. (Phot) Robinson, Lieutenant Commander Burrows, Lieutenant Commander Roberts, Lieutenant Sargent, RM, Lieutenant Carslake, Shipwright Sub Lieutenant Prodger, and L.A.M. Burrell, well backed up on occasions by various other people. The closest and most exciting races have been those against the Aden Combined Services Sailing Club which ended in a tie, and against the N.B.S.C. for the Centaur Plate which we won by one point, the result of the latter race depended upon whether P.O. Robinson could overtake the last two N.B.S.C. boats on the last beat to the line, which he did within a few feet of the finish. Our most embarrassing race was that against HMS CHICHESTER, we finished 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, only to discover on our return to the clubhouse that the fleet had been led round the wrong course and had missed one buoy out - moral, never follow the chap in front just because he looks as though he knows the way! Our visits to Labuan have provided us with some excellent sailing in beautiful conditions against the Combined Services Sailing Club, and a sailing match against them now appears to be a regular feature of the flight change-over routine.

In January of this year P.O. (Phot) Robinson, L.A.M. Burrell and Sub Lieutenant Prodger were selected to sail in the Naval team in the Far East Inter-Service Championships. Until this year the Royal Navy had always been the Cinderellas of inter-service sailing this year however, we were a good second to the R.A.F. and it is obvious that the standard of Naval sailing has improved (perhaps as a result of the introduction of the Bosun dinghy?) Had ALBION not been at sea at the time of the Championships it

is probable that we would have had more representatives, and who knows, the Navy might then have done even better?

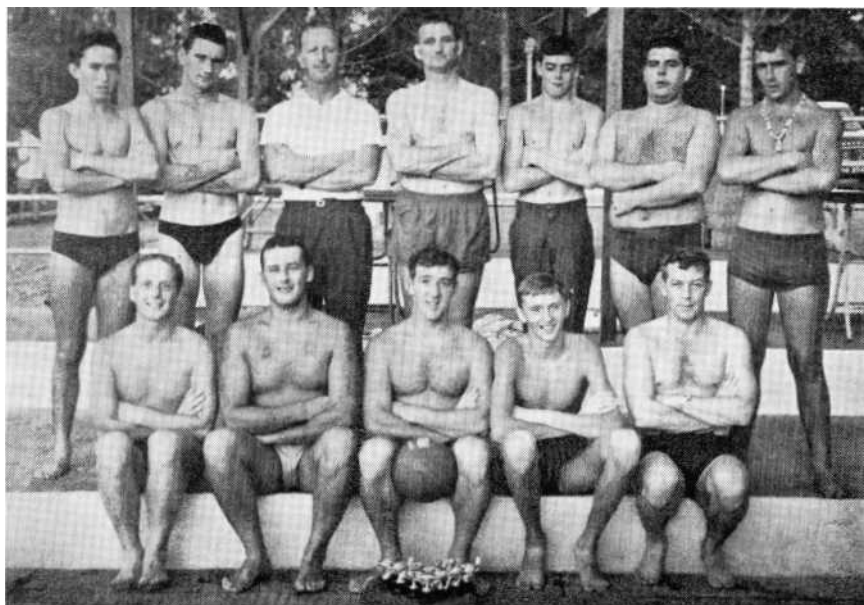


Cock ship again.

For the many of us that have sailed, whether it has been racing or simply messing about in boats, this has been an interesting and enjoyable commission, one which we shall all remember and perhaps even look back on a little wistfully when sailing again in those chilly waters around the U.K.

Of course, at the moment of writing this, it is not yet all over and we look forward to a final skirmish against the local experts at Singapore. Perhaps a few races on the homeward journey, with of course a needle match against BULWARK somewhere along the way, and then the possibility of the Bosun dinghy championships at Portsmouth on September 17th and 18th, or will this be too much to expect the "grass widows" to accept after 18 months away?

WATER POLO



The water polo team has had, generally speaking, a very successful commission.

When P.O.P.T.I. Solly first began to form a team in U.K., we had only three players with previous experience of the game. However, in the first trial we found that there was a great deal of potential among the novice players. In fact, within a week of forming the team we managed to gain a convincing win over the P.T. School at Portsmouth. Before leaving U.K. we were able to play 10 matches, losing only one to the Vernon Divers, whom we later defeated in a return game.

Against stiff opposition, we lost our first two matches East of Suez to the R.A.F. Middle East team at Aden.

On arrival in S.N.B. we soon made a name for ourselves by winning our first six matches. Since then we have played 30 games, winning 21, with 1 draw and 8 losses. In all we have scored 232 goals against the opposition's mere 125.

In July 1965 we fought our way through the preliminary rounds of the Challenge Cup competition, only to suffer defeat at the hands of the Triumph team in the final, by 14 goals to 7.

During the Millsports, February 1966, we won our qualifying matches very comfortably, but were indeed unlucky to lose 2-3 to Ajax in the semi-final.

Much of the success and morale of the team must be attributed to L.Ck. Coomer, himself a full Navy player and captain of the Far East Navy team, who has devoted much of his time to coaching the inexperienced players. Able Seamen Rieper and Garber obviously benefited from this as they have both represented the Far East Navy. To add to his achievements L.Ck. Coomer was the only European to play in the Singapore State Team at the Malaysian Games in June 1965. As captain and centre forward of the Albion team he has scored over 180 goals.

The team was further reinforced in January of this year by the arrival of L.M.(E) Barrow, another full Navy cap. Unfortunately at the same time we lost A.B. Rieper when he was drafted back to U.K.

The team has also been served well by the following players:-

L.A. Archbold	E.M.1 Cudby	N.A. Edwards	L.R.O. Evans
P.O.M. (E) Freeguard	E.M.1 M.B. Hodges	Mid. Littlejohns	S/LT Moorhouse
L.S. Pinnells	A.A. 1 Stockdale	Mne. Walker	

RUGBY CLUB

This commission has produced a wide variety of rugby - many good games and a few poor games. The vast majority however have provided a great deal of enjoyment for the players if not great spectacles for the crowds (?) watching.

Several memorable events need describing. August 1965 when we played the Combined Services Labuan at Jesselton. On being exhorted to greater things before the game one of the team replied - "Our gimmick is to go the whole commission without winning a game." We just lost that game 11 - 8 but what a night that was afterwards at the Golf Club! The \$20 Welfare allowance to entertain the other team didn't go very far in paying the \$572 "Tiger" bill. Our blood game against BULWARK was a thriller where the team played above itself and only lost 3-0 by being deceived by the two sets of lines marked on the pitch. We have had our notable successes in beating ARK ROYAL 6-3 and RAF Khormaksar on the sand at Aden 11 - 3. The latter result quite upset the crabs because we were the first ship to beat them. This was the advantage of going back to the Middle East after a period in the Far East, the dry heat of Aden proved no worry at all - also the sessions of 5BX under Philip Belgeonne had the team very fit indeed.

One of the largest crowds we had was for the game v. Seychelles. Your scribe refuses to say he refed the game - participated with a whistle was more like it - only blowing up if a player was more than 50 yards off-side and looked like scoring!! Things that "stood out" in that game were the bare feet of the opposition and seeing our left winger tackled into the river mud alongside the pitch.

Lately we have had some games. v. Singapore. We were well and truly thrashed by the international side 34-0 but we beat them at drinking afterwards! The pace of this game was exceedingly fast and the standard very high. ALBION's team never gave up and really did more than was expected of them.

The 7-a-side competitions have done much to improve the standard of play - people can be seen running with the ball and passing it but still the players must learn to tackle low and bring the opposition down with a bang. There were some lovely tackles to be seen in the Invitation XV v. Singapore where the OTAGO centre bounced his opposite number at least 5 yards backwards. Mind you there were the time we had a competition with someone "Drunk in charge of a flag".

Some personalities that require mentioning are Chris Furse for his leadership in the first half of the commission. He was followed by Philip Belgeonne who kept us fit. After the December departure of Philip and Peter Moorhouse we had a lean spell then the guiding hand of Mike Jones was felt.

I started to name a few outstanding players as well as captains but have had to delete this and start this paragraph again because in all honesty I couldn't mention just a few. All our players have supported the club very well indeed and without their support nothing would have been possible. To all who "made one" in the sevens and the "Over 30s" and all our regular players Thank You for your support and remember our big match to come - BULWARK in August at Aden. Let's show them!

SHOOTING

. 303

The 1965 SINGAPORE Bisley held at the BUKIT TIMAH Range was our first meeting and although no major trophies were won, many of the team gained individual prizes and the experience made it all worth while.

Millsport 1966 was our most notable event. We won the the DURBAN CUP (Team of 10), the DANAÉ CUP for team snaphooting and the TEAM TILE CUP, ALBION A and B teams making finalists in both the latter events. Weapons Mechanician DARAGON crowned the meeting by becoming both the Fleet Rifle Champion and the Far East Fleet Weapons Champion.

. 22

Fortunately the RAF Bases in SINGAPORE have very enthusiastic .22 Clubs and it is largely due to their generous invitations to use their ranges that POM(E) CONISBEE and RPO MAIDEN were selected to shoot for the victorious Navy 30 in the Service Championships 1966.

Competing in the KO HENG PO Cup in May 1966, ALBION was placed 4th out of 14 teams, Weapons Mechanician DARAGON scoring 198/200 to take the highest individual score prize.

One lasting memory, a team match against the SEYCHELLES Police, we lost the match but made many friends.



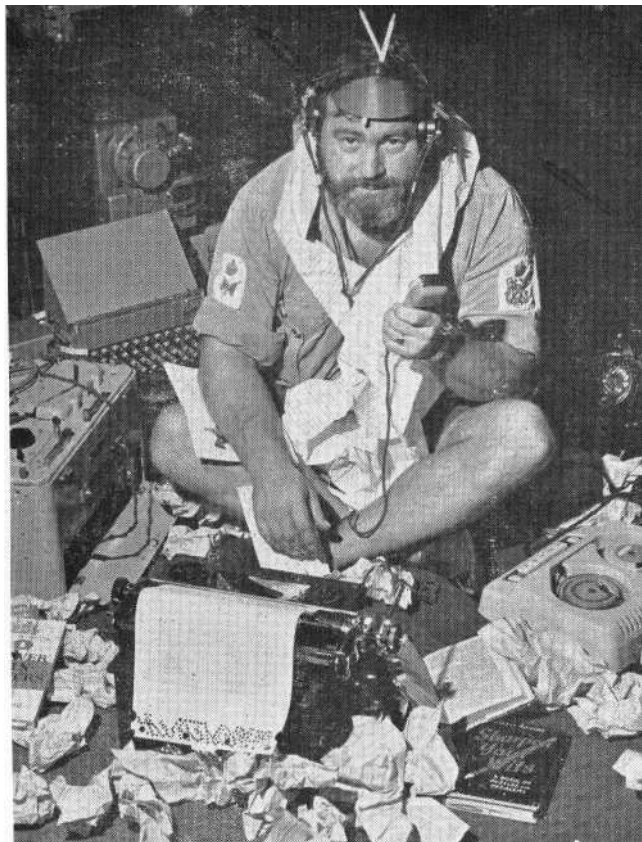
The 1st XV and Over 30's. Which is which?

The following have played for the first XV (but not all at the same time!)

Tom Adam	Chris Furse	Harry Matthews	Swannie Swann
Bruce Brown	Alan House	Mo Mogridge	Adrian Sullivan
Chippy Brittle	Will Holden	Peter Moorhouse	Smudge Smithers
Philip Belgeonne	Frank Hewer	Donald Neilson	Mike Sheppard
Muscles Buckton	Mike Jones	Ralph Pratt	Slinger Wood
Pete Calland	Taff Jenkins	Robert Proudfoot	Bungy Williams
Nobby Clarke	Ken Lewis	Taff Rowlands	George Whitelock
Alan Clutterbuck	Jeff Little	Frederick Robinson	
Paddy Fenton	Speaky Lowe	Barney Ruddle	
Percy Freegard	John Marshall	Mike Swann	

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ARGUS

Our Chief Reporter and Puzzle Editor.



He looks like this because he is short of material - what about a contribution from you NOW.

CONCLUSION



(By Capt. B. C. G. Place, V.C., D.S.C.)

And what have we done? What have we seen? What have we accomplished? What, in fact, will each one of us remember best about our time in the ship and what will be remembered best by others of this commission of HMS ALBION?

I hope this book will help call to mind the pleasantest recollections - Kobe, Mombasa, Hong Kong, Penang: and those times when the going was tough but the achievements were noteworthy - Windy Weather, Flying Foot, the Commando - Renjer roulement, Long Hop. And, perhaps, Herculean efforts by individuals or small groups of men that seemed to go almost unnoticed because they were well done - that machine refitted overnight, that unit fed at short notice, those stores embarked, that compartment kept clean and smart in spite of the dirt and the heat and the damp. But above all, I hope this book will remind us of each other and the friends we have all made in this ship's company.

A warship is still the most complex and interlocked organisation of different professional skills in any walk of life - and a commando ship more so than most others. The inter-reliance between so many men of such varied expertise makes for a comradeship that we should remember for a long time: a comradeship that has made possible the two remarks I heard, that I personally shall remember most about this ship: "Albion to me is the most useful ship on the station" (a very senior officer of another service) and - from someone in the Naval Base - "It's always fun when Albion's in Singapore: they do things."



Full ahead for home.

We remember with gratitude the lives and examples of our shipmates:-

BRUCE BROWN,

Lieutenant, Royal Navy, 848 Squadron.

PETER BARTLETT DAWES,

Midshipman, Royal Navy, 848 Squadron.

MA HUK KIM,

Steward, Royal Navy.

MICHAEL JAMES SHEPPARD,

Midshipman, Royal Navy.

WILLIAM ANDREW TASKER,

Leading Electrical Mechanic, Royal Navy.

FREDERICK ARTHUR TRASNELL,

Petty Officer, Royal Navy, 848 Squadron.

TIMOTHY JAMES HURST WOTTON,

Acting Sub-Lieutenant, Royal Navy, 848 Squadron.

THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS ARE IN THE HAND OF GOD
AND THERE SHALL NO TORMENT TOUCH THEM.

R. I. P.