

826 Squadron Aircrew: * LS John CHARNLEY; AB Norman DARBY; LS Dave PARROTT; Lt P. A. FISH; S/Lt M. C. PEAKE; Lt C. W. WAITE; LS Dick GODLEY PO Larry LARCOMBE; LS Norman CHROSSAN; LS Buster BROWNE; LS Sid SHARMAN. ** S/Lt J. R. PRICE; Lt A. B. VEALE; Lt A. B. ROSS; Lt J. B. HARVEY; Lt D. H. BESWICK; Lt I. C. DOMONEY; CPO(TASD) Sugar BUSH; Lt J. G. EACOTT; Lt E. J. DOBINSON; Lt D. S. DOUGLAS; S/Lt C. D. FERBRACHE; S/Lt B. D. HILL; Lt I. THORPE. *** Lt K. G. LAMPREY; Lt A. SOMMER; Lt P. J. G. HARPER; Lt-Cdr I. A. SOMERVILLE-McALESTER (SOBS); Lt-Cdr H. A. MAYERS (XO); Lt-Cdr R. E. VAN DER PLANK (CO); Lt C. L. L. QUARRIE (SP); Lt C. P. YOUNG; Lt C. R. A. HILL; Lt J. E. V. MADGWICK; Lt D. A. RAINES.

entered harbour. After a hectic visit, we were once more back to work with DANA'S ORI which turned into a SUBMISS when one of a submarine's indicator buoys came adrift. The submarine surfaced happily a few hours later, in complete oblivion of the concern above the waves.

Back to Singapore and SIMBANG where the bachelors and unaccompanied members did most of the work, the others having their wives with them. Again our talents as salesmen were put to the test demonstrating the Sea King's Search and Rescue capabilities to the Singaporeans. A week later they were to hear of an excellent example of the aircraft's capabilities.

We were to carry out an exercise in the Subic Areas, but because of Typhoon ELAINE'S presence, it was cancelled. During the storm the ship received an SOS from Mv STEEL VENDOR aground on a reef and breaking-up. Four aircraft were scrambled and the Master and crew of forty men were back on board EAGLE within three hours, the ship having been seventy miles away at the time of the distress call. Our next port of call was Hong Kong where on arrival the ship was presented with a silver tray by the members of the American Sailors' Trades Union for our part in the rescue. During our stay we continued flying in yet another role, lifting building materials for the Hong Kong Government and the Royal Engineers. (Photo, right.)

On leaving Hong Kong we looked forward to six weeks at sea. We were kept fully occupied during this time, which involved an unprecedented amount of flying. Our first task was to lead the helicopter formation flypast for the departing Commander-in-Chief, Far East, at Singapore. Then followed Exercise CURTAIN CALL which was two weeks of intensive anti-submarine and anti-FPB exercises split up by an enjoyable and relaxing week-end on the beaches of Langkawi.

After a fast passage westwards, we carried out another week of exercises off Gan.

From Gan we journeyed to Masira and, because of the political situation in the Middle East, the planned exercises were cancelled and only limited flying was carried out. Our intended visit to Mombasa was also cancelled and we remained off Masira until mid-December. It was then decided that three aircraft with five crews should be detached



to HMS ALBION to assist in the evacuation of foreign nationals from East Pakistan. By the time ALBION had reached the southern tip of India, the evacuees had already been flown out. After a brief visit to Gan, ALBION sailed for South Africa where the three aircraft were flown back to EAGLE in Durban harbour. For the crews and aircraft that had remained in EAGLE a reasonable amount of flying was done, including the last CASEX of the commission.

A very enjoyable Christmas was spent in Durban with hospitality lavished upon the squadron. The last leg of the commission included a visit to Ascension Island to collect and deliver mail and to make a photographic survey for a new golf course. Then a final 'rabbit' run in Gibraltar prior to reaching Culdrose, where the squadron finally disembarked complete with an enormous number of 'rabbits'.

Now the inevitable statistics to date since receiving the new aircraft: We have flown 4,500 hours, taken part in 95 Casexes, carried 2,000 passengers, taken part in 6 Casevac operations, and lifted 17 Spey engines for our friendly Buccaneer Squadron. We have also had the pleasure of carrying COMFEF, FOCAS, and FO2FEF and 'sinking' 8 British, 2 Australian, 1 American and 2 Norwegian submarines. Apart from EAGLE, we have also operated from six other ships and 45 different airfields spread all over the world from Norway to New Zealand.

849 NAVAL AIR SQUADRON, D FLIGHT

During the summer of 1970 the Flight had an almost complete changeover of Personnel. During the Brawdy run-down period we had to get to know not only each other but also the improved version of the APS 20 radar with which our AEW3s were equipped. In October, a single Gannet was embarked in EAGLE for deck trials whilst we fought to keep Brawdy open for just one more night flying period. By the time S/Lt Noel Pinder had returned the deck trial aircraft, S/Lt Brian Hardy had joined us, having taken over the duties of AEO from Lt Mike Kerry.

We finally left Brawdy for the last time on 9 November for the first work-up flying period, disembarking to our new base at Lossiemouth exactly one month later.

After re-embarking in January with Lt Ken Patrick as new COD pilot, we made our way to the Mediterranean, the ORI, and Villefranche. An excellent run was enjoyed in Villefranche, and two parties of flight officers and ratings disappeared on expeditions. Lt McGhee's party returned with monstrous hangovers and CAM Wentworth's with blisters. After we left Villefranche we

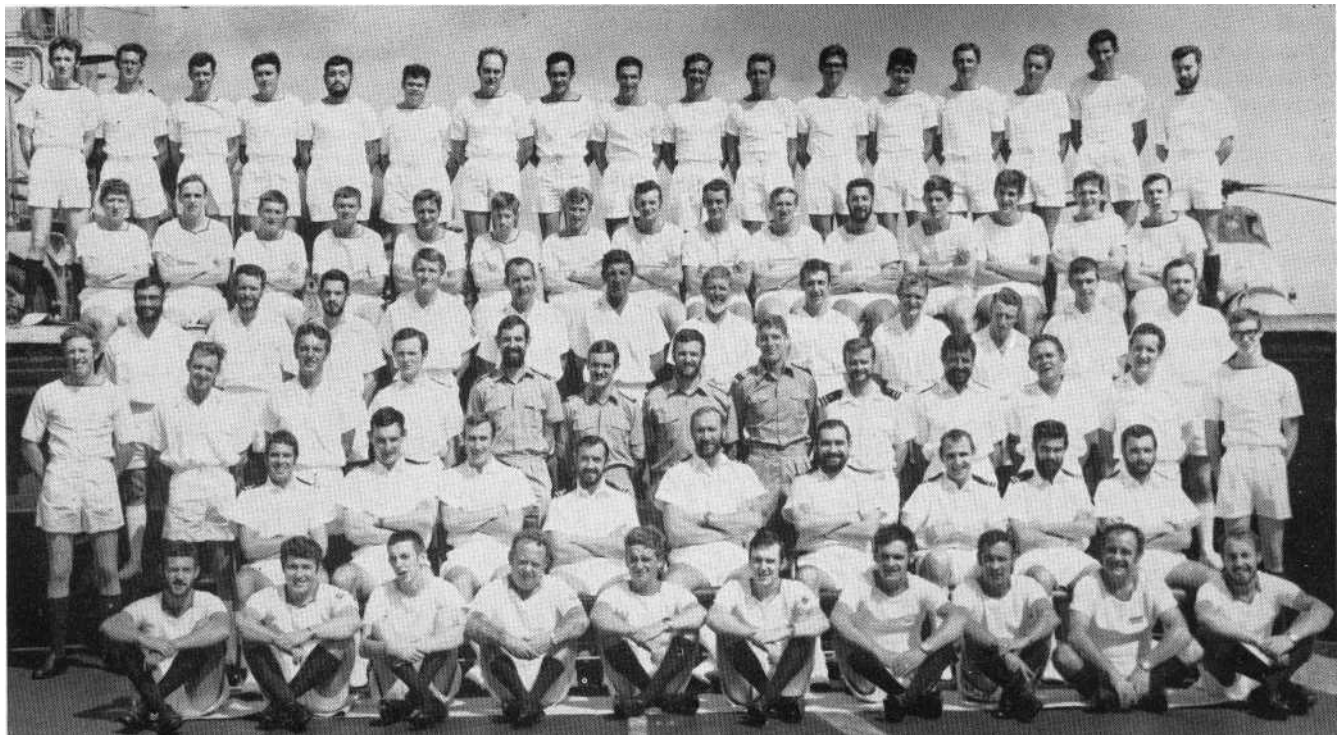
lost Lt Pearce, who will always, in future, check the security of deadlights before looking out of scuttles! We are happy to relate he has now recovered and is flying again. 073 had a nasty bump as well, and Lt Steadman and SOBS flew it back to UK. They returned, some considerable time later, to Malta, after an epic journey during which they encountered most of the emergencies in the book: low cloud and gliders in France, and snow at Hyeres and Sardinia. The ubiquitous Welgate Travel had meanwhile managed to ferry out various wives and girl-friends who appeared in summer cottons to a windy, wet and cold Malta. Nevertheless, the disembarked flying at LUQA provided a change, and some NAVEXES were flown to Sicily. A good flight run was organised, and the soccer team surprised everybody. 073 (new) was finally patched up enough to return on board; wives and girl-friends were flown home; and we embarked for the final spell.

After Malta we had a further flying period during which the Senior Pilot took the COD to the USS F. D. ROOSEVELT and returned without the use of a catapult. Whilst off Gib, the Vixens and

Gannets put on a 'shop window' when we managed to get all five Gannets airborne. Needless to say, all five managed to disembark to Lossiemouth again for leave; maintenance; instrument ratings and a couple of distillery runs.

Buzz and counter buzz had been flying round, but not until Capetown was it obvious that the Far East really was our destination. On the operational side the flying before and during the Singapore SMP was fairly uninteresting; however, both aircraft and men remained fit and thrived on Tiger and sunshine. The SPLOT also enjoyed buying us drinks with his £500 Grand Draw prize. There was still a Lightning squadron at Tengah, and 849, with 899, were able to thoroughly confuse them and the radar unit at Bukit Gombak from time to time. We then embarked for our Australasian tour. However, one AEW3 diverted with asymmetric flap. Eventually, after further Alarums and Excursions, we headed for our second winter that summer.

The mammoth fly-past at Sydney behind us, we secured down under



849 'D' Flight: * NAM Cliff PARKES; LA(AH) Blood REED L/Std Terry RICE; REM(A) Mid MIDDLETON; LEM(A) Tony WEBSTER; LREM(A) Harry TAYLOR; LREM(A) Dennis HAYNES; LEM(A) John SCHOFIELD; LAM Ken BICHARD; LAM Ed JONES; LREM(A) Paul BESTWICK; NAM Merve NASH; EM(A) Taff HALE; EM(A) Isaac NEWTON; LAM John RAWLINGS; LAM Doc VASS; NA(AH) Paddy COSGROVE. ** LSA Dusty PILLING; Std Dave WARNE; NAM Mick PARKES; LAM Ray MURKIN; REM(A) Collin ASHWORTH; Std Ginge O'Brien; NAM Dave CLACHAN; REM(A) Tom CHESHIRE; EM(A) Ian DIMBLEBY; LEM(A) Biff BURTON; LA(SE) Jock KLAR; Std T. C. COONAN; LREM(A) Lofty DAVIS; REM(A) Mick SEABROOK; NAM Nelie COOMBES. *** LMN2 Fred BROWN; PO(AH) Spike HUGHES; REA(A)2 Pat CAMPBELL; AA2 Pete FRENCH; CAF John PERKS; REA1 John PURDY; CAM Bill WENTWORTH; CEA(A) TOM WINN; POEL(A) Ned DRAPER; POREL(A) Jan WOOTTON; RMN3 Bill BAILEY; LMN(A)2 Terry MORGAN. **** NAM Ginge LEWIS; CAF Mac MACFARLANE; AA1 Tony LAMBERT; Lt Noel PINDER; F/Lt Al BRUYN; Fg/O John (Min) McNEIL; Fg/O Chris (Max) O'CONNELL; F/Lt Bill FOXALL; Lt Jim LAW (USN); S/Lt Brian HARDY (AEO); CAF Stan FULCHER; AMI Dave BROWN; Std Ken HOLLOMBY. ***** Lt Kevin MEEHAN; Lt Nigel HAYLER; Lt Ken PATRICK; Lt Peter MOULDING (SOBS); Lt-Cdr Keith HARRIS (CO); Lt Doug STEADMAN (SP); Lt TOM MCGHEE; Lt Rodger BOWLES; Lt Al GRIFFITHS. ***** EM(A) Terry CONWAY; LAM Gareth TUCKETT; Std Frank GALLAGHER; L/Wtr Scribes WILKINSON; EM(A) Basher BATES; L/Ck Chris BENNET; NAM Benny HOWARTH; LAM George BOYD; Std Joe HADLEY; Std Fred GREEN.

near the still unfinished Opera House to 'recharge our batteries' and acquire Lt Peter Moulding, our new SOBS, losing 'Rusty' Gealer to the USA. The day of sailing plunged us into Exercise Southern Clime, part 1. Part 1 was frustrating for us tactically; but plenty of day and night flying was logged. Part 2 was plagued by weather which, however, enabled the diverted aircrew to enjoy a sample of Kiwi hospitality. Despite the weather, we managed a fly-past in Wellington Bay and began the wonderful visit with some good publicity. The Kiwis obviously liked 849.

All good things come to an end, and soon we headed West, having reached the easternmost point of the commission. With batteries further exhausted by Fremantle, we found ourselves back amongst our old Hunting Grounds in Singapore. This time a number of the wives were with us by courtesy of Crabair. This meant that many of us got further afield than the nearest bar and saw some of the country. An interesting flight run was drunk (who DID produce that brandy?) in the Half-way House, Bukit Timah.

And so to Hong Kong via any Typhoons we could find, while some wives braved the trip in the appropriately named SS TYPHOON(?) SHAN. We disembarked two AEW3s at Kai Tak and the flight split up, some ashore and others on board. An excellent visit, with members going as far afield as Macau and Wanchai. Lt-Cdr Tom



Over Sydney

Lowrie left at this juncture to join the team waiting in a bar somewhere for an AEW Shackleton to happen, and all the officers at the top took one step up with Lt-Cdr Keith Harris taking over as CO. A new crab joined us, and we now have the Biggest, Smallest, Brainiest and Most Senior Crabs in the ship. With our leaving Hong Kong, we closed a chapter of British History and we headed for the Indian Ocean, pausing briefly to bow out of Singapore. A very useful period of flying followed off Penang with exercise Curtain Call; we left the Far East fully worked up and ready for the final phase of the tour. The flyex off Gan showed us that things could still crumble, and we exchanged some shell-cases for no marine markers with our friends at

Gan. At the time of writing we are just getting stuck into the final major flyex before our visits to Mombasa, Durban and, finally, Gibraltar, for last-minute rabbits and a quick dive into the Eros Club.

Once it is all over, most of us will look back on an interesting cruise where we have seen a medley of faces and places; but, professionally, it might perhaps have been a bit frustrating and a bit sad to have ended our era. We have, in just over a year, seen the end of Brawdy, EAGLE, 'D' flight and the beginning of the end of Lossiemouth. However, men and aircraft have held together and standards maintained to the end and, with luck, we will be the only fixed-wing squadron to fly off exactly what we flew on last May.

899 NAVAL AIR SQUADRON



Take 14 Sea Vixens, 215 first-class maintainers, an assortment of aircrew, throw them all together on HMS EAGLE and you get 'The Bunch with the Punch'; 'The First Division'; or 'Monty Redwood's Flying Circus'. Whatever the name, the result means professionalism, and that is 899 Squadron.

The story of this commission really starts on 11 November 1970 when most of our aircraft embarked and the work-up got underway. 'Six days shalt thou labour', and on the seventh finish

flying, sail to Southampton and rest-the aeroplanes, that is.

To continue the work-up, the ship sailed into the Bristol Channel, with the main aim of the Squadron being to fire as many missiles as possible on Aberporth Range. However, the big Flyco in the sky had a different fly-pro to ours and, on several occasions, weather, ships in the range, and target unserviceabilities, caused us to cancel most of the firings. Nevertheless, when it came to disembark for Christmas, we had more than justified our existence on board and were looking forward to what the New Year would bring: that is, the two-thirds who had the good luck to remain with us!

The first two weeks of 1971 were spent at Yeovilton, introducing the new members to the Squadron; re-forming the aircrew; and generally clearing away the alcoholic haze and other left-

overs from leave. On Tuesday, 19 January, all aircraft were onboard again; but, owing to bad weather, instead of operating in the English Channel, we moved north to the Isle of Man and commenced hitting the splash (well, nearly) with 2-in R/P.

With the GPO strike in full swing at this time, another role was added to the many of the Vixen - that of mail van - and, on several occasions, the 899 Pony Express could be seen on the bow catapult with its dashing riders (normally the Senior Pilot) raring to go.

Better weather enabled us to achieve some night flying and, on the 31st, we made passage south for Gibraltar; alas, only for one day before we were straight into the Ship's ORI. This meant two CAP airborne throughout daylight hours, a commitment which was fulfilled completely. The reward was another visit to Gibraltar.

899 NAS - continued

It was back into the Med. on 8 February and for four days our main tasks were AI and 2-in R/P attacks. During this period an old hulk, *FRESHNER*, was to be used as a target for Ship's guns and Seacat, but '99 were kindly given first shot with R/P. Of course, it sank! That's what we are here for, but there were a few red faces in the planning office afterwards.

A quick visit to the Cote d'Azur was followed by exercise 'Perfect Princess' in the waters off Sardinia, which provided us with a diversion and some very interesting TAC-R routes. On completion the ship sailed towards Malta where three weeks ashore at Luqa awaited, plus, for some, wives as well.

March started with an achievement unsurpassed by any other fighter aircraft. The Squadron had accumulated 20,000 flying hours since February 1961 when it formed with Sea Vixens. With an average of 10 aircraft on the Squadron at any one time, each aircraft has averaged 200 hours per year. The Queen of the skies is aptly named.

Our visit to Malta coincided with the leaving of the CO, Lt-Cdr M. H. G. Layard, destined for fishhead duties, and a welcome was given to his replacement, Lt-Cdr F. Milner. The usual run on the island was enjoyed by all, but eventually the roads took their toll

on the hired cars and it was safer and cheaper to return on board and sail into combat with the American Carrier *FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT*. *EAGLE* struck first and remained ahead. The strike role was also allocated to '99 as the other squadron had a slight crumble. With the war being brought to a successful conclusion, we started homeward, with the usual stop at Gibraltar for rabbits, and to pick up Lt Burnside, who joined us on April Fool's Day.

Just before leaving the Med., a firepower demonstration was organised, which turned out to be an 899 Squadron benefit day as the bomber squadron had already disembarked. Then into the Atlantic, fly off, and fight our way through Customs before taking two weeks' leave. At this time we lost some notable aircrew, including the AWI, Lt Mike Garlick, who appeared to have a change of heart and left the Navy to go and heal. Fortunately for the human race, his activities will be directed towards the animal kingdom.

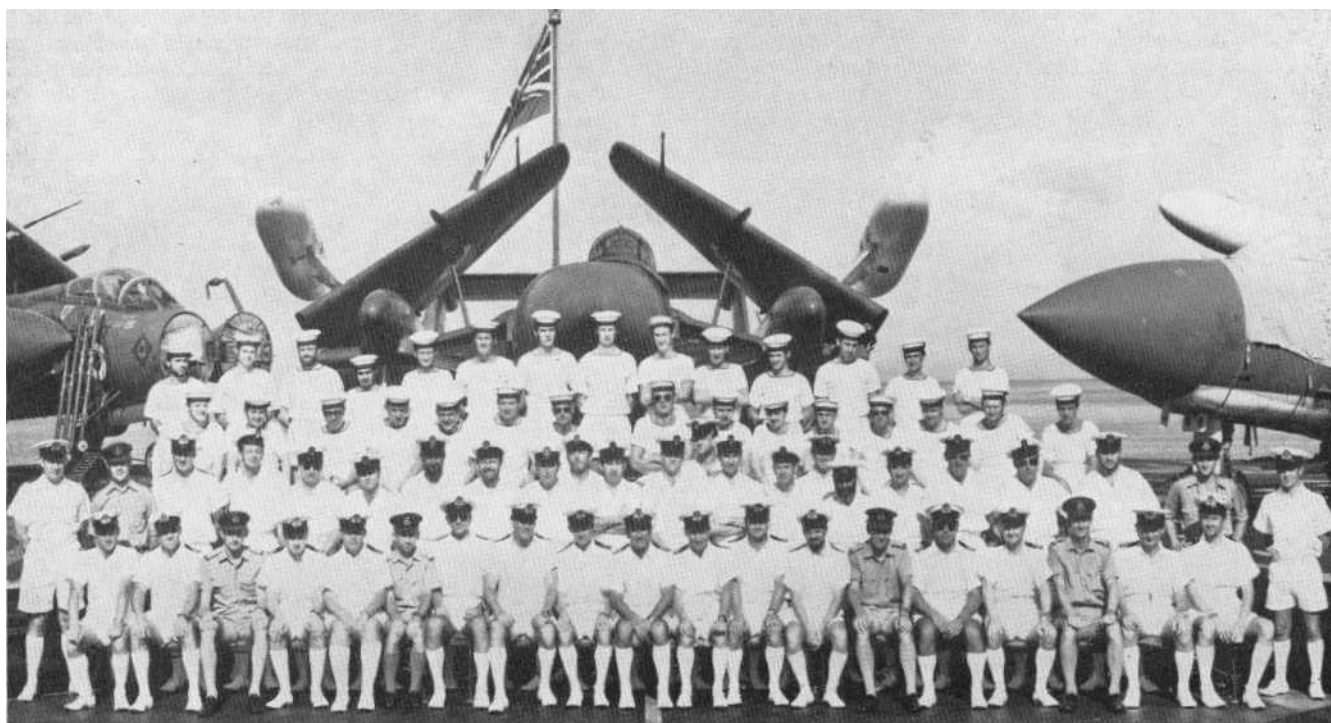
On 26 May we re-embarked, and this was followed by five days' intensive day and night flying to work-up both Ship and Squadron to their former peak. It was then south to Capetown where that good ol' trophy appeared again. Our stay in South Africa was short but memorable. Next, we took part in a fly past off Mauritius, quickly followed by

a beat-up of Diego Garcia and four days' day and night flying in the Penang area before disembarking eight aircraft to Tengah.

Thus commenced two weeks' pleasant flying in and around Malaysia and Singapore. During this period Lt-Cdr W. L. T. Pepe assumed the duties of Senior Pilot. The old Splot was dined out in the best '99 tradition: ten-course Chinese meal followed by the usual Tiger hunt. Talking about sport, it must be mentioned that the Squadron has an outstanding record on the sports fields of the world, and we also have PO Cronin who has been selected for the English Karate Team: no mean feat, as most of his training is done on board. (We often wondered who cracked the boom of 122.)

Unfortunately, all good things have to come to an end and we set sail on 21 July. This was followed by two days' flying, mainly CAS, 250 miles north of the ship. As luck would have it, we were required in Sydney on 4 August and for a fly past the day before, so again we crossed into the Southern Hemisphere. Five days in Sydney soon got rid of tanned skins, to be replaced by the usual squadron brand of night-club pallor, but exercise Southern Clime Part One awaited, so we went back to sea to oppose the R.A.A.F.

With Part One under our belts, Part



899 Naval Air Squadron - Daymen: * Std CATANIA; LREM FERRIDAY; L/Std MOFFAT; Std POOL; LA HOLLOWAY; NAM BUSH; Std VEASEY; EMA BREWARD; LA PUGSLEY; NA WILKINSON; NAM BUCHANAN; NAM BIRD; LAM BADHAM; NA WAREHAM. ** Std MOULD; Std O'NEIL; L/Std KEIFER; Ck STUART; A/PO/Wtr PAYNE; LSA KELLY; OEM BETTS; LAM WHEELER; NA MASON; Ck BRITTON; NA SZYCAK; EMA REID; NAM BYRNE; LREM VAN DE CAPPELLE; Ck ROUGHT. *** Lt BRUMHILL; F/O PARKER; Lt ALLAN; POAF BURLINGHAM; CAF MORRIS; RELMI FRASER; EA1 BARTLETT; AA1 COX; FCEA REDWOOD; CREL TROW; PO/Sid BREMNER; POAF RICHARDS; RELMI JOHNSON; POAF BUSH; CREA MARGETTS & Lt SCOTT; CEL ASHFORD; CAF COPESTAKE; RELMI TAYLOR; EA1 PRATT; CAA WILLIAMS; F/O WISTOW; Lt BROCK. **** Lt DICK; Lt CHAPLIN; F/O LAWTON; Lt LLOYD; Lt EITZEN; F/O McNAMARA; Lt WHALEY; Lt-Cdr TAYLOR; Lt-Cdr PEPPE; Lt-Cdr MILNER; Lt-Cdr WATERHOUSE; Lt FULLER; Lt ALDRED; F/O SHELBOURN; Lt NEWSON; Lt GAVIN; F/O WHITTLE; Lt SHARMAN; Lt EDWARDS.

Two commenced, but, owing to bad weather, most of it was scrubbed. Two Vixens flew to OHAKEA in New Zealand, the next country to have the pleasure of our company, where they were, unhappily, grounded for two days, as were the aircrew - happily.

We arrived in Wellington shortly afterwards and this visit will probably go down with Durban as one of the best runs of the commission. It was so good that a replacement pilot from UK was immediately made Duty Boy, because there was nobody else on board and if there was they were six feet up, conserving with one lung shut down and the alcoholic suction pump going at full stroke. Not many of us saw the ship on 26 August but somebody said that we had to be in Fremantle on 9 September and who were we to complain?

Fly? Only three days of it before entering Fremantle and two days en-route to Singapore where we hoped to have a rest from all the work we were putting in. But it was not to be, because some had their wives out from UK, while the rest had to make the usual social calls on the pools at TENGAH, TERROR and CHANGI, plus the night-spot of the Orient, Bugis Street. Nevertheless, in between times the aircrew were kept in practice in the aircrafts' number one role, AI, and on several occasions Hunters of the SAF and Mirages of the RAAF became missile fodder.

On 5 October all aircraft re-embarked successfully and, despite many difficul-

ties, such as the lorries being unable to carry enough, all the rabbits were stowed on board before the ship sailed for the Philippines.

This next period at sea should have seen all the aircrew firing missiles against targets provided by the Americans from Cubi Point, but Typhoons 'Faye' and 'Gloria' reigned supreme in the area and, after persevering with flying in very difficult conditions, we finally gave up and sailed for Hong Kong. We put five aircraft ashore to KAITAK for continuation flying and, during this period, took part in the farewell salute for the retiring Governor of Hong Kong and also a fly past in honour of Princess Anne who was visiting the colony.

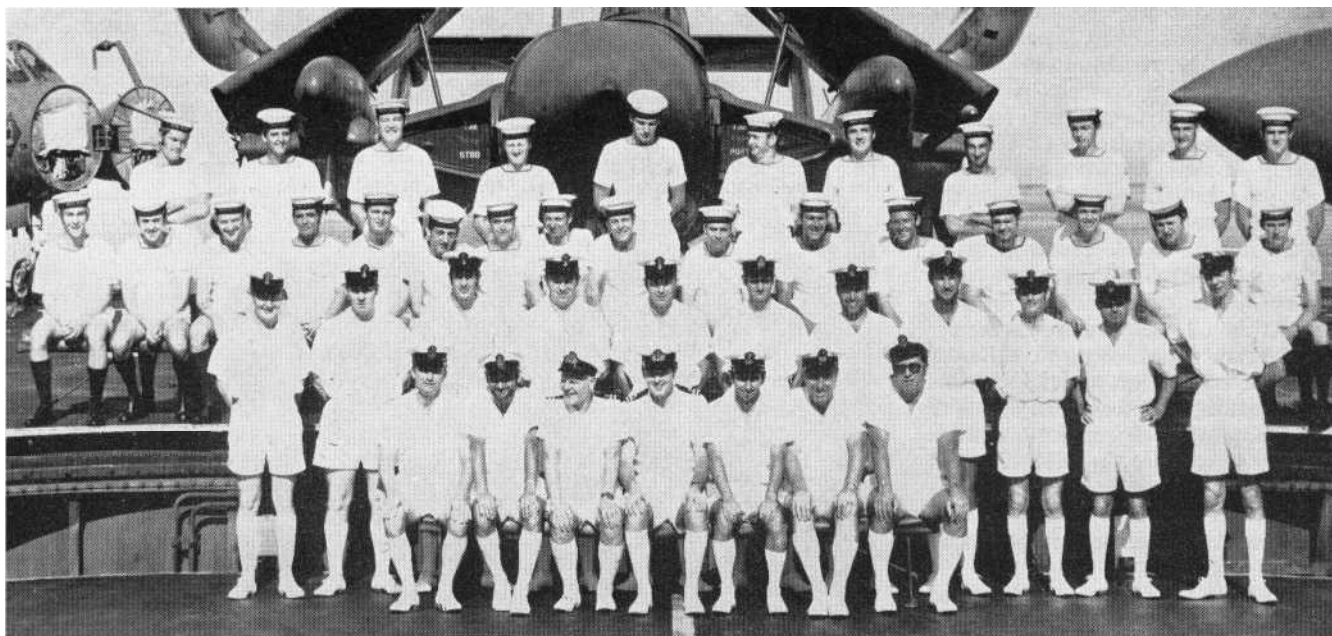
Again, there were no complaints about the life ashore even though some had their wives and girl-friends to look after them. But standards were not allowed to drop, not even on the football field, where the Ship's Trophy was won by our goal-happy footballers. Sadly, however, on 27 October, the ship sailed south-west for the Singapore area followed by exercise 'Curtain Call' off Penang and so starting a period of 56 days continuously at sea.

By this time several members had left for the UK: 'arry had gone, but 'Taff' took over, the only difference being the accent; George (SD) Phepoe never recovered from his leaving run in Hong Kong and was seen leaving the ship with tears streaming down his face; and 'definitely 25th for the next

launch' Wheeler left leaving all his pens to the aircrew.

'Curtain Call' found us pitting our wits against the Malaysian and Australian squadrons based at BUTTERWORTH and also against the ever-elusive splash targets at which we were now firing 2-in R/P. The night-flying programme was also put into full swing and a regular eight Vixens launched each night on Lepus strikes and a variety of AI sorties. Most returned back on board as planned but one night the ship took pity on our aircraft having to be at sea for such a long time and sent them ashore to BUTTERWORTH overnight. The aircrew, deeply distressed at the thought of being on dry land again, drowned their sorrows in typical fashion at the Ambassador Hotel.

The next stop was at Gan for six days' and nights' flying, and then we went into the Gulf area. With the flying days now numbered, we looked forward to the visits to Mombasa (alas, we never got there) and Durban, where the hospitality and friendship shown over the festive period was fantastic. We sailed on 4 January for the UK via Gibraltar. After a short visit there, the aircraft were catapulted off the ship for the last time, and there our tale ends because on return the last remaining Vixen Squadron will be no more and the number 899 will be parked. However, we can be sure that the Squadron will go out in style. Just like that run down Bugis Street in '71: 'Yes, I remember it well - I was on '99 at the time!'



899 Naval Air Squadron - White Watch: * LREM FERRIDAY; EMA KNELLER; REM URWIN; A/LAM BARNES; EMA HARPER; OEM CHAPMAN; A/LAM CHAMBERLAIN; NAM ALLEN; LAM CLARKE; REM HAUGHEY; REM COUSINS. ** OEM GOODBY; NAM GREHAN; A/LAM RACHER; NAM O'NIELL; NAM REYNOLDS; EMA GREEN; NAM GROOMBRIDGE; LEM RENSHAW; REM STEVENSON; LAM BOND; LAM WATERS; LAM BARANSKI; NAM DOWNEY; NAM MAHONEY; EMA STEWART; NAM LITCHFIELD; NAM HARMER. *** A/POOEL O'KILL; POEL MABBOT; AA2 DIXON; LM2 SANDERS; POEL KNOWLES; AA1 CROFT; POOEL KEATING; EA1 COLE; EA2 COOPER; A/POREL CASSAR; AMN2 KAVULOK. **** CAF(O) RUTHERFORD; EA1 MOORE; Lt BENNETT; Lt ROWELL; AMN1 CLARKE; CAF(AE) THOMAS; RMNI MOORE.



EAGLE SEARCH & RESCUE FLIGHT

During the summer of 1970 the flight had a complete change-over of personnel. This was followed by our own work-up and ORI, before we joined the ship in September with two Wessex Mk. I aircraft.

Friday, 13 November, 1970, produced our first, and happily our only, aircrew rescue job when a Vixen crashed off the bow catapult. Since then our excitement has all come from the many odd jobs we are called upon to do, such as VERTREPS; VERTREVS (the Sunday morning padre transfers); passing the tow; mail and passenger flights.

We disembarked to Culdrose for Christmas leave before heading for the Mediterranean and the ship's ORI. While anchored in Gibraltar Bay the SAR was scrambled to take a firesuitman and extinguishers to SS BYZANTIUM, a merchant ship on fire alongside the mole. On completion of the mission the aircraft was unable to return to the ship owing to dangerous turbulence, so diverted to North Front for what, perhaps only, the crew considered a well-earned, crafty week-end, ashore.

After a splendid visit to Villefranche the ship proceeded to Malta, where our highlight was a scramble to assist the crew of SS POPI which had run aground on Comino, a small island between Malta and Gozo. However, we were not needed as the crew were able to step off the fo'c'sle onto the shore.

We again disembarked to Culdrose for Easter Leave when the ship returned to Plymouth, and re-embarked with three aircraft on 25 May. Our third has been kept mainly in reserve but has proved invaluable in keeping us on the job during our various maintenance crises: notably six engine and two main gearbox changes.

In Capetown, Rear-Admiral Williams joined us, and we had our first experience of being the Admiral's Barge: a job which has kept us quite busy ever since. On arrival at Singapore we disembarked to SIMBANG for continuation



SAR Flight: * LAM Andy ANDERSON; LAM Ken MOORE; POAM Chris GRANT; POEL Ian ARTHURS; POAF Roger HENLEY; POEL Flipper OLKES; NAM Jan GIBSON; AA1 Tug TUDGAY; LS Alf TUPPER. ** EA1 Charles ABRAHAM; Lt Mike LAWRENCE; Lt Alex MARSH; Lt Buzz BARR; AM1 Robbie ROBERTSON. *** NAM A1 PUNT; LAM Stew CROWTHER; POREL Gerry STEPHENSON; LREM Ken MOULTON; LREM Don MCKENZIE; LEM Tug WILSON; EMA Trev LUCAS; NAM Willie LYNES.

training, after which we had to leave one aircraft there for a major corrosion job to be carried out for us by MARTSU while we paid our respects to Australia and New Zealand. On return we disembarked again and found the third aircraft ready and waiting for us.

In Hong Kong we were able to assist the local inhabitants by lifting several loads of playground equipment from an MFV to an inaccessible site on a hill-top, and we also joined in the farewell flypast for the departing Governor-General.

THE FLEET CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS

On 24 May 1971 the Fleet Chief Petty Officers, long talked about under other names, came into being. Aboard HMS EAGLE there were twelve promoted at that time and since then two others have been promoted.

They occupied jobs within the ship from flying to eating and supplying to steaming. The Captain approved that they should have their own mess and the first and probably the only President at that time of a Fleet Chiefs' Mess was FCMEM Lilley. When he went on to his new appointment at LOCHINVAR, his position was taken over by FSCA Ellwood. On both occasions the Vice-President has been FCMEA(H)

Husband

The Fleet Chiefs have played important roles in the various sections as Managers and Divisional Officers and the Ship's Company are slowly beginning to appreciate their wide experience in and out of their own departments.

Not only have they left their mark upon the Ship's Company of HMS EAGLE but upon the various ports that they have called in; in particular, Wellington, where they were known as 'The Dirty Dozen' (affectionately, of course).

All in all, it was a notable and enjoyable commission for all of them and will long be talked about in days to come.



Fleet Chief Petty Officers and Senior Chief Petty Officers: CRS PARKER; Mr MUSK; CCY SLATTER; Mr FIELDING; Mr WILKINSON; Mr COLLINS; Mr ALFORD; Mr LOCKWOOD; SBM TOMLIN; Mr REDWOOD; Mr PEASEY; Mr ELLWOOD; Mr BIGGINS; Mr HUSBAND.

THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

'The Emergency Ward 10 Of HMS EAGLE, where steely-eyed teams of skilled Medical experts work long hours into the night resuscitating the intrepid aviators and dissecting other unfortunates to remove their elusive appendices.' A description of the Sick Bay? Well, not quite, but we do have our moments, and HMS EAGLE's last commission has not been at all uneventful, medically.

The new Sick Bay team had mostly joined by May 1970 and smoothly took over with capable guidance from CPOMA 'Wally' Soulsby. Surgeon Lt Gibson was still on board, and the PMO, Surgeon Cdr Adamson, was still in overall charge as he completed his second year in EAGLE. The PMO in fact 'signed on' for this commission and will have served four years continuously in EAGLE by the time he leaves in 1972: such dedication.

Our Physiotherapist, MT2(P) Woodmason, was 'made up' about halfway through the commission and, in contrast to the last Physiotherapist, shaved his beard off. He now looks about ten years younger. Laboratory work has been capably undertaken by MT4(L) Iorns, whose services were naturally heavily in demand in the Far East flesh-pots. He also was made-up from Acting MT4 to MT4. The ward has been run by MT3 Nickson, who joined us originally as an MT4. He is our State Registered Nurse.

The commission began inauspiciously with a six-month docking and maintenance period in Devonport Dockyard. This produced the usual mess and upset all departments, not least the Medical Department. Whilst EAGLE was in Dock, we were all accommodated in CENTAUR, and the new Sick Bay team was faced with the problem of running two Sick Bays.

EAGLE's Sick Bay was also being refurbished and looked like a disaster area most of the time. In addition, the cockroaches were found in many parts of EAGLE, and there were outcries from all over the ship. It was pointed out that an old lady of EAGLE's vintage had by this time built up a sizeable cockroach population, which can never be completely eradicated. The situation regrettably worsened in the Far East. There was at least a ready source of supply for Cockroach Races.

Dr Stronge had already gone off to HASLAR to get married (and to work, presumably) and the PMO found things busy when Dr Gibson was called away to HMS RALEIGH on two occasions for a total of about six weeks. Surgeon Lt

Rendall, our new Anaesthetist, cunningly delayed his joining date until September and so missed the chaos. During the maintenance period, MAs Watt and Edwards and MT2(P) Woodmason were married; nothing like the prospect of a few long weeks at sea to accelerate the decision.

On 26 September 1970 EAGLE was at last looking ship-shape and sailed on time. Everyone was glad to get to sea at last, although we soon became familiar with the appalling chaos caused by RAS (solids) every few days, with flour and peas floating around the main corridor of the Sick Bay in Courage No 1 or Tiger Beer. These RASs were often enlivened by the Flight Deck Party 'lubricating' the canvas chutes with buckets of water, which added

left us in January 1971 and were replaced by MA(O) Nelson and MA McLaren.

January saw, at last, the start of our Mediterranean Cruise. We had one more work-up to do before our Operational Readiness Inspection. After this we were all allowed to relax and enjoy Gibraltar, Villefranche and Malta. Malta was a busy time for the Sick Bay, and we were ably helped by the David Bruce Hospital (RNH MTARFA). Dr Rendall and Dr Gibson both went to RAF LUQA to help with the extra work caused by our squadrons, as did MA Watt. MA McLaren, MT2 Woodmason and MT3 Nickson on the other hand decided to do their Commando bit at Ghain Tuffieha camp and seemed to survive. During the Mediterranean



Medical Department: * MA Mac McLAREN; MA Alan WATT; MA Colin WASLEY; MA George BRADLEY; MT4(L) Bob IORNS; MA(O) Tony NELSON; MA Danny Ross. ** A/POMA John HAMLIN; MT2(P) Geoff WOODMASON; Surg Lt C. M. S. RENDALL; Surg Cdr R. J. W. ADAMSON (PMO); Surg Lt D. W. R. GIBSON; FCMA Peter PEASEY; MT3 Nick NICKSON.

nicely to the melee down below. The Shake Down Cruise gave everyone a chance to really get to know the ship; find out the duties of a Flight Deck MA, and try to find space for the innumerable Medical Stores.

The First Work-up was an instructive time for all of us, and a casualty from a ditched Sea Vixen provided us with a genuine Medical case. He later turned out to have a crushed vertebra (from ejecting), but fortunately made a full recovery. The first visit of the commission - Southampton - was enjoyed by all, and relations were cordial with RNH HASLAR. Parties of MAs and Nurses came to visit the Ship from the Medical Training Division. The latter were much appreciated by everyone.

Dr Rendall joined the bandwagon and got married during Christmas Leave. MA(O) Neal and MA Edwards

Cruise we inoculated the whole Ship's Company against Cholera for what amounted to be a false alarm. This disease was apparently raging in all areas east of Gibraltar, but a week later was not! However, once started, we decided to carry on with the six-monthly booster jabs as they would be needed later in the commission anyway. The PMO celebrated the fiftieth appendectomy he personally has performed at sea, just before Malta. The rest of the Ship's Company buckled their trousers tighter and steered clear of the Sick Bay for a while.

Easter at Devonport saw mountains of dressings and drugs littering every conceivable space in preparation for our Far East trip. They were eventually disposed of one way or another. Chief Wally Soulsby left the ship in May and was appointed to RNH GIBRALTAR in

June as a Fleet Chief MA. Chief Peter Peasey arrived in May to replace the bold Wally and was rapidly elevated to Fleet Chief MA on 24 May, two days prior to the Ship sailing to the mysterious Orient.

During the trip, various members of the Sick Bay Staff were summoned to King Neptune's Court as we crossed the line, including the PMO complete with his lovely blond wig, and JMA Statham, fresh out from HASLAR, and then the youngest member of the Ship's Company. We arrived at Cape Town and our first night in Port as far as the Sick Bay was concerned could be aptly christened the 'Battle of Capetown' Make and Mends were well deserved the next day.

The PMO had 'contacts' in Cape Town, and several Senior Consultants from the Groote Schuur Hospital visited the ship, including Professor Jannie Louw. MAs Nelson and Watt went up to the hospital to witness open heart surgery: a fascinating day for them.

Singapore was remarkable, from a medical viewpoint, for the incredible number of ear infections: the dreaded 'Singapore Ear'. On the worst days up to fifty people a day were having ear-drops put in four times a day.

The Antipodean leg of the commission proved interesting to all, and the hospitality was particularly good in Wellington. Also in Wellington, Bruce Mills, a young Maori boy who was paralysed from a spinal tumour, visited us and enjoyed being shown around the Ship. Afterwards he was fed with huge helpings of ice cream and fruit in the Sick Bay by MA(O) Nelson. In Fremantle, MT3 Nickson was given the task of organising the final Ship's Company Dance, which was held in the Pagoda Ballroom. He made a great success of this and it certainly set the visit off with a swing.

The Australasian trip was marred by the LOX Plant fire, when the two badly burned men came under our care initially. It made us all realise that everyone was needed for the intensive care of just two casualties. We were thankful that there were no more. The LOX fire also burnt out both Dental Surgeries and the Dentists were loaned our Emergency Operating Theatre. Later, the forward Dental Surgery was re-equipped for the Dentists, and the after one was then used to house the medical stores previously stored in the Emergency Operating Theatre.

After our final Far East visit, this time to Hong Kong, the Sick Bay looked like a departmental store with camphor wood chests, tables and

bicycles stowed in every nook and cranny. Nightly games of Mah-jongg made the Sick Bay sound like a Chinese suburban flat with the rattle of the tiles. After Hong Kong we were slowly homeward bound, but with much sea-time to go first. MA Watt had to be left ashore at Hong Kong with severe conjunctivitis and did not rejoin us for a considerable time.

During the commission we had visits from: Surgeon Lt-Cdr Martin, RNR (a gynaecologist!); Surgeon Lt Fraser, RNR; Surgeon Lt Clarke, RNR; and, last but not least, Surgeon Lt-Cdr Frank Golden, RN, an Aviation Medicine Specialist, and an Irishman, who proved very interesting with an inexhaustible fund of flying and non-flying anecdotes.

Statistics? - Well, just a few taken over a fairly representative six months

of the commission from May to October 1971. During that time we got through 20,000 Penicillin tablets; 40,000 Aspirin and Codeine tablets; 8,000 Cholera injections; 30,000 gauze swabs; and 50 gallons of rot-gut mixture. In addition, four people had appendices removed and seven circumcisions were done. The total number of appendicectomies since DED at the time of going to press was seventeen.

Finally, although we would hate anyone to think that we cannot deal with any medical situation, we have left patients in Lossiemouth; Gibraltar; Malta; Ascension Island; Cape Town; Singapore; Sydney; Wellington; Fremantle; Hong Kong; Penang; Gan; Masirah; Mombasa; Durban and, of course, Plymouth and Portsmouth. We like to do the best thing for our patients.

REFLECTIONS IN A DENTAL MIRROR

There are 75,000 teeth carried in HMS EAGLE, give or take a few: we have done both. The mammoth task of making the ship's company dentally fit was started in Devonport on board HMS CENTAUR during the DED. Treatment was carried out in rather cramped and archaic conditions by Surgeon Commander Gregory, assisted by Petty Officer Marshall and Leading Medical Assistant Matthews. The return to 'alma mater' at the end of July was a welcome event.

The dental team was completed by the arrival of Surgeon Lieutenant Hargreaves shortly before the ship sailed for sea trials. The new man moved straight into a newly furnished, well-lit surgery: the dental department was now fully operational. With the

embarkation of the squadrons the task became even more formidable, but after three months in the Mediterranean great progress had been made.

During the passage to the Far East, Lt Hargreaves was detached, with a portable unit, to HMS GLAMORGAN to attend to the dental health of 550 more men.

Shortly after sailing from Singapore the disastrous fire occurred in the LOX plant immediately below one dental surgery, which was completely gutted. The other was badly damaged, and a temporary dental surgery was opened in the Emergency Operating Theatre. The portable unit was flown back from GLAMORGAN, and further stores were borrowed from the Royal Australian Navy on arrival in Sydney. After much hard work by the Shipwright and Electrical Departments, one of the surgeries was reopened early in September. The Dental Department was once again firing on all cylinders.

Since the DED, treatment carried out includes over 4,000 fillings; 250 extractions; 550 scale and polishes; 200 new dentures and over 40 dentures repaired. There have even been three pairs of spectacles mended. Over 5,000 anguished visitors have been treated: a few only came to see the pin-ups on the deckhead; one admitted coming only to see the model railway.

LMA Matthews left the ship in Australia and was replaced by Medical Assistant Hughes. Petty Officer Marshall, and the ship, was honoured when, on 14 August, 1971, he was presented with the Sick Bay Petty Officers' Efficiency Medal.



Dental Department: * MA D. HUGHES; POMA G. MARSHALL. ** Surg Cdr (D) W. J. GREGORY; Surg Lt (D) J. HARGREAVES.

THE WEAPON SUPPLY PARTY - GREETHAM'S GORILLAS

What is the Weapon Supply Party? The snappy catch answer would be to ask the Weapon Supply Officer - but it's the Weapon Supply Officer asking the question! After five confused months on board I still have not read one of these magazines that go the rounds everyday. So far I've gathered that WSO II rides bicycles when not counting fuzes; Chief Arnott flogs crests, probably stolen from the ship's boats; Chief Ashby - he's a bar manager or something; PO Lloyd sits and growls at WSO II, muttering 'redundant' to himself; POs Brown and Savage (a right name for a gorilla) do watch and watch about sunbathing on the roof. Then there are the two mysterious Americans who march round the ship - GIs they call them - what they have to do with weapon supply is anyone's guess. I think they flog crested paper, or something!

The rest of the party spend all day transporting 2 x 1,000-lb bombs; 2 x 500-lb bombs, and 2 Lepus up and down Nos 1, 2 and 3 bomb lifts. They tell me they do this for two reasons. One is to make the command think there are lots of these down below; the other is that it disturbs the ACRO, who objects to holes in his playground. I know there's no bombs down below. For one thing, no one would allow the WSP to play with live explosives, and the other is that K section is an illicit still and T section a motor-cycle garage.

As for supplying Weapons - that's a laugh. The 4.5 guns have a tape recorder in the barrels that makes bang sounds (or is it G3 quoting the gunnery manual in his dulcet tones?) and the smoke is really the exhaust from that garage in T section. As for supplying Air Weapons - well, they put G2 on



Weapon Supply Party: * AB Bwyan RODGERS; LAM(O) Legs ORDERS; NAM(O) Holly HOLLINGSWORTH; NAM(O) Mick WELHAM; AB Yorky BRAMMER; OEM(A) Chris BLOWERS; LAM(O) Olly OLIVER; LAM(O) '513' BLAKEMORE; LAM(O) Steve HEMMING; LAM(O) Steve STEVENSON. ** OS John HEELEY; AB Nick NICHOLAS; AB Fess PARKER; AB Father O'KELL; AB Ted THAXTER; AB Jim HATTON; AB Chris PEARSON; AB Phill FLAKE; AB Spider KELLY; AB D. D. JONES. *** OEM(A) Fanta SCOTT; NAM(O) Danny KNOWLES; LAM(O) Fred FURNESS; NAM(O) Stu STAPLEFORD; OEM(A) Paddy WALKER; LAM(O) Bungy WILLIAMS; NAM(O) Wraz WRAZEN; LAM(O) Annie OAKLEY; NAM(O) Sleepy GLEESON; LAM(O) Brum DAVIES. **** LS Scouse LONDON; POAM Derek SAVAGE; CPO Norman ARNOTT; Lt C. S. C. MORGAN (G2); Lt-Cdr F. O. PIKE (GO); Lt E. W. GREETHAM (WSO); S/Lt J. A. NUNDY (WSO2); POOEL Mick LLOYD; POOEL Bomber BROWN. ***** 1,000-lb Bomb, No. 742.

top of FLYCO with a pair of binoculars and told him if he looks long enough he'll see the nudes of Cote d'Azur. He thinks we are in the Med (mind you, with WSO II watchkeeping, we could be off the South of France!). He shouts peculiar numbers into a microphone: I think it is to the tick-tack men in yellow coats on the flight deck.

In harbour the WSP drive the cranes; for this they take their percentage of all stores loaded onto the ship: it's quite a big cut as they have to keep Big G happy. They seem to know when he's happy: he wanders round the ship loaded with paper saying 'Fantastic' to everyone.

During my five months on board, the WSP achieved a record: 1,000-lb bomb No 742 had its 5,000th trip up to the flight deck. They held a special ceremony for this and gave the Lift God a human sacrifice. They threw me down the lift! At least, I did give the WSP one thing. My name. No I didn't. They even stole that. Nothing is sacred to these gorillas.

The WSP have worked out to a fine detail the de-ammo at Portsmouth. They are off loading their six 'weapons' on the port side, quickly taking the lighters to the starboard side, bringing them back onboard and repeating the whole operation for two and a half weeks. They won't even be there to do it: they'll have the rest of the ship's company doing it. If they don't let me out of this padded cell on 25 February I can see de-ammoing of EAGLE taking years! It will not worry the WSP. They will either be working rackets on other

ships or will be outside (inside if I can prove certain things).

The question, 'What is the Weapon Supply Party' still remains a mystery to me, but I'll stay quiet as long as they visit me every day.

LAUNDRY CREW

A few words from the Laundry Crew, written shortly before the ship reached Hong Kong.

We, laundry crew, every day work from 7 am in the morning till 10 pm in the night. That's up to how many laundry is handed in. Of course some days we finish the work in midnight, especially on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Twenty-three persons form the crew. The oldest of us is Mr Keung, the Number One Boy. He is sixty. The youngest one only twenty-two. Of course our hobbies are different from each other, but usually we like to play 'Mah-Chung' a Chinese game which takes four persons to play. We like drink tea, coffee and beer of course, but we don't like steak and chips so we have our own cook to cook our own food every day.

We are all come from Hong Kong, and we are now looking forward to going back to Hong Kong for some of us not see their family more than three years.

We receive six to seven hundred bundles of laundry every day, not including the officers'. There must be some mistake between us, so we hope the Ship's Company will excuse us, and we always try to do our best. Thanks very much.



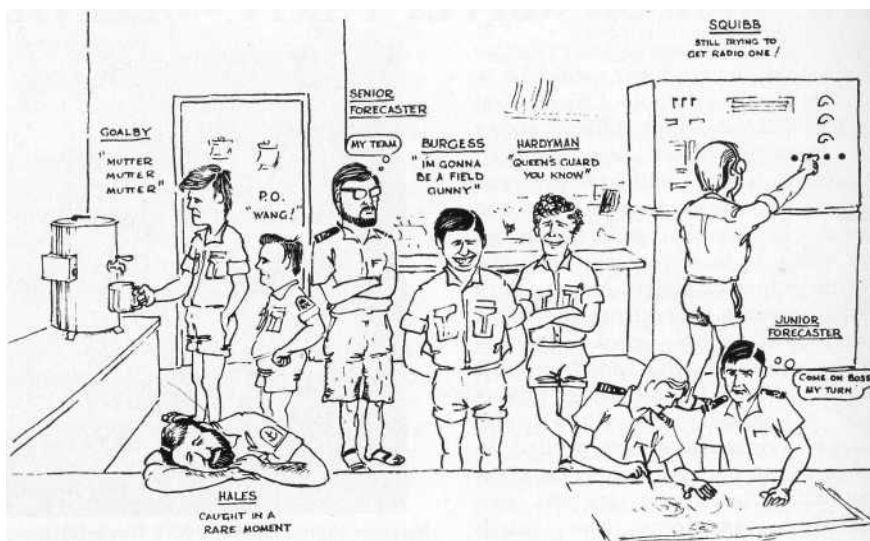
Midshipmen (December 1971): * R. P. HODGSON; R. S. KENNAN; R. M. L. BURROWS. ** V. S. JAMES; W. J. KNIGHT; J. P. MILTON-THOMPSON (Senior Mid); S. C. MARTIN. Absent: R. S. CRIGHTON; N. P. GARWOOD; C. J. BROWN.

MET OFFICE

Providing weather all day long to suit all tastes is more in the Padre's line of work, but unfortunately the Met Office is expected not only to do this but also to write forecasts and get them right. We could tell you how we have never (well, hardly ever) written a duff forecast, but no one would believe us. However, we do handle more signals than the Communications Centre, and have not yet failed to provide sufficiently good weather to enable the ship to enter harbour on the right day. We never close, like the bars in Wanchai, where sometimes the overnight chart has been drawn up.

Ours is a small office with two forecasters: the Senior Forecaster (or Duff Gen Leader, as the aircrew call him), and Forecaster (Duff Gen 2), Petty Officer plus five. We make up for what we lack in numbers by technical expertise and sheer efficiency. The efficiency and speed of response when 'Secure from flying stations' is piped is almost unbelievable. The technical expertise is provided by the Senior Instructor Officer, Commander Dacam, who also subsidises his runs ashore from the wardroom accounts.

Lt-Cdr MacDonald, or 'D.D.' to his friends, took the ship to sea, but soon wore out under the strain of his beard's effect on the Captain, and his habit of having a cigar at breakfast. Leaving in Singapore, along with NA Plackett, the only baldheaded teenager on board, he was replaced by Lt-Cdr Sidford, who only appears to be here for the beer and is seen wandering vaguely around the ship modelling the latest in maxi-shorts. Lt Sullivan, as Met 3, developed



an insatiable appetite for (among other things) coffee, and spent half a fortune on Hi Fi, but can't remember, or won't tell, where the other half went.

PO Knight, that ace diver of the crew, also runs the office coffee boat with such efficiency that it subsidised an office movie run in Singapore: but that's another story. Suffice it to say that no one was actually caught by the police. Also a diver, LA Burgess is reported to have spent a fortune in sticky greens in the Wanchai, and his tattoos have to be seen to be believed (once is enough, though). NA Hardyman, a quiet, well-liked lad, but for the demon drink, did his thing in the Royal Guard at Singapore and is spreading the rumour that he was asked to repeat the performance outside Buckingham Palace in time for Christmas. Also keen on sport, LA Hales regularly plays for

the Ship's 2nd XV and is also a keen supporter of the Bugis Street team. LA Squibb has more than a lingering memory of Capetown and Fremantle, and NA Goalby referees FA matches (for a consideration) in spite of his wooden leg.

EDUCATION

Men always find it more difficult to study than they think: filling in an application form for a correspondence course does not get the work done; enrolling for maths classes does not produce an 'O' level certificate by magic within a month or two. As the hundreds who have tried it could testify - it's a long slog that requires quite a sacrifice of time.

The early DED days were especially difficult since students had to trek across from work of one kind in EAGLE to their studies in CENTAUR. The school-room in CENTAUR was ideally situated, just aft of midships on the most frequently used deck. In EAGLE, the first lesson any new pupil has is that of finding 7E1. 'You know the canteen flat?' - Always a good teaching point to work from the known to the unknown - 'Just forrard of there is the bakehouse, and opposite is a ladder. Go down two ladders and turn right in the messdeck and down another one. It looks like a laundry down there but turn right and you'll find it.' With room for about twenty, seated, at a pinch, the ventilation was never really adequate. The fog clouds of tobacco smoke rolled in as the topic of the day developed, be it long division with decimals; quadratic equations; the design of the vacuum flask; or the adventures of Drake. Small classes were always a blessing to take.



The Met Office and Education Department show their teeth: * Instr Lt BINKS; NA GOALBY; LA HALES; PO KNIGHT; LA SQUIBB; NA HARDYMAN; NA BURGESS; Instr Lt HARRISON. ** Instr Lt-Cdr SIDFORD; Instr Cdr DAGAM; Instr Lt SULLIVAN.

Education - continued

The regular round of the Naval Maths and English Test every four months, and of the GCE Ordinary Levels every five or seven, made routine landmarks for the staff: for the pupils these events invariably arrived too quickly. Instructor Lieutenant Harrison, the Education Officer, has been on board for over three years now and has battled with countless NAMET candidates, who are often reluctant to come to school - the prospects of cash and promotion never seemed as motivating as the metaphorical boot of the divisional officer.

At the time of deployment to the Far East, the main problem was that of keeping the Maths 'O' level class to a manageable size. There were days when, in two sessions, sixty men were squeezed into the narrow box past which the bow wave could usually be heard sloshing. 'Come early and get a seat,' was the cry, and the keener ones were doing just that, arriving early in standeas to get a seat in the front row stalls. (Of the original sixty, about twenty fell by the wayside, another score decided to wait awhile before taking the exam and, of those remaining, nineteen passed.)

With eight months away from home, and much of that at sea, classes were fairly popular. Not only did Instructor Commander Dacam and Instructor Lieutenant Sullivan make the time to teach, along with their meteorological and other duties, but we were able to employ Instructor Lieutenant Braley for the first few months. Spared from the wilds of CALEDONIA for a short time only, he took his leave in Wellington,

to be replaced by Instructor Lieutenant Binks, who managed to take time enough off from drumming-up enthusiasm amongst his NAMET candidates to find out all about the computers on board - his next appointment is to develop them for future ships. For those who have been able to make the effort and sustain it, the reward of obtaining an 'O' level or two, or the desired grade in NAMET, has been worth while. Maybe it has meant writing fewer letters, or playing less cribbage.



Royal Marines Beat Retreat on Ascension Island

THE ROYAL MARINES BAND

Since the Band embarked on 1 September, 1970, we have given you musical entertainment whenever possible. We have done this with one or other of our several variants - the 16-piece Dance Band; the 7-piece Dance Band; the Military Programme Band and, of

course, the now very popular 'Strawberry Jam Factory'.

We have provided a Band Display for Official Cocktail Parties in every port of call, and we also visited Ascension Island to Beat Retreat. In Wellington, we went to Wanganui where we Beat Retreat and also gave a Military Band and Dance Band Concert in aid of the Commonwealth Games Appeal Fund. At the Governor's Farewell Celebrations in Hong Kong we took part in a massed band display with bands from the Hong Kong Police, Gurkhas and Royal Welch Fusiliers.

Many of you are probably unaware that we also have an Orchestra which usually provides music for Wardroom Dinners. While in Singapore we were required to play for a Farewell Dinner given by The Commander, Far East Fleet.

It has also been our pleasure to provide music at Ship's Company Concerts, Ship's Dances, Sunday Church Services on the Quarterdeck and the Concerts in the Junior Rates' Dining Hall. Seen, but not always heard, we have also played a few tunes on the flight deck during RAS(S).

At Action or Emergency Stations it has been our job to man the First Aid Posts and provide Gunnery Recorders.



Royal Marines Band: * Musn Nobby CLARKE; Musn Dicky VALENTINE; Musn Bert PARTON; Musn Smiler RUMMING; Musn Andy MYTUM; Musn Max HILL; MUsn Oscar PETERSON; MUsn Ray SMITHSON; Musn Harry MARTINSON. ** MUsn Alan UPTON; Musn Mick MURRAY; Musn Gazz DAVIES; Musn Pete KING; Musn Geoff McGARR; Musn Pete SCOTT; Musn Taff JONES; Musn Tug WILSON. *** Bug Alan BROOKER; B/Cpl Jim MCMEEL; S/Bd/Mr Jack TOMLIN; Captain I. G. W. ROBERTSON; Lt C. E. G. BONNER; B/Sgt Wally WALTON; B/Cpl Dave FILLINGHAM. **** Bug Plum PLUMMER; Bug Jan BETTINSON.



Sounds Fayre at Malta

REVUES, PANTOMIMES AND ALL THAT

In March 1971, ashore at Malta, the EAGLE PLAYERS were busy putting the final touches to what turned out to be a very professional performance. 'Panomania' was the name for the revue in which all the ships of the Western Fleet currently in Malta took part. EAGLE's contribution was a fast-flowing forty-five minutes' worth of thrills, spills and fun all neatly woven together into non-stop entertainment by the producer, Lieutenant Peter Turner. The two-act revue was given a necessary touch of feminine charm by Pan's People of the BBC, flown out for the occasion. The programme announced that it was a guide as to what might happen, but it happened as planned and was a great success, thanks to the talents of the director of the whole show, Lt-Cdr Peter Nightingale of the FOFWF staff. EAGLE's contribution was aptly described by the Captain when he said, 'I was very impressed with the extremely high standard of EAGLE's contribution to Panomania. It would have been a frail show without the Big E. Well done, everyone.'

In July, 'Vote for Crun', a musical comedy, gave another demonstration of EAGLE talent in the Sultan Theatre in Singapore. It ran for three nights, but was poorly attended: those who saw it were most impressed, but the Players enjoyed it, and that was the main thing. Written by Tom Taylor and Paul Haines, it was a lively, very entertaining show combining a selection of well-known tunes with well-chosen skits on the words. Tom Taylor, who played the lead part, also directed the 'songsters', and the overall production and the acting out of the plot were under the direction of Peter Turner. It was a well-polished and slick show, and the expert playing of the Royal Marines Band was a main contribution to it.

On 23 and 24 November, whilst at sea, an EAGLE REVUE was put on. 'The evening's entertainment was as fresh and sparkling as any bunch of amateurs could concoct on a village hall stage: to do so well in a desolate hangar on a floating airfield-cum-factory does great credit to all concerned.'

-EAGLE EXPRESS.

'The show was put on stage, and to say it was "good" would be a gross understatement.'

-EAGLE EXPRESS.

The Ds, 800 squadron, and the artists who had been steadily making themselves well known and popular through the weekly informal 'Sing-alongs', put together a splendid evening's entertainment. The Ship's groups by that time had settled down well: the jam Factory; Sounds Fayre; the Yellow Boot; the 'B' Unit Choir; each performed its own type of speciality well. There was individual talent in

abundance, too: James Bond; Ricky Dennis; Nelson and Hardy. And the audience was not left out, and they joined in heartily with the choruses.

The Christmas pantomime, CINDERELLA, was written and produced by John Laurijsson. It was to have been held in Mombasa, again with the help of Pan's people. Instead, it was performed in the Upperanger Theatre. Busty Den Wright and miniskirted Clive Cheney as the ugly sisters (how ugly can you get?), and Chris Masterman as Cinderella, were helped out by some other *gorgeous* females. Many people were surprised at the effect that a wig, a couple of old socks, a yard or two of pusser's bunting and six weeks out of sight of land could have! The birds were stunning. The rest of the show went off very well, too, with all the usuals and several other excellent subsidiary acts as well. Buttons (Malcolm Fuller) looked remarkably like a golliwog, and Brian Taylor, as Prince Charming, brought the house down with his mime to the strains of 'Some Enchanted Evening'. The plot worked out its inevitable spell only too quickly, and the size twelve steaming boot was duly fitted (with the help of Dandini, Colin Bonner), leading up to the final chorus, superbly led by Mick Fickling and Bungy Edwards. The backstage team, under the charge of John Nundy and Trevor Ling, worked as hard as ever - and thanks went out, as always, to the nameless, faceless multitude who do the chores . . . shipwrights, electricians, AED workshops, hangar control, sailmaker, and so on. It was a splendid final evening's entertainment from the EAGLE PLAYERS who have served the Ship so well during the commission.

Line-up at the panto

