

THE COMMUNICATOR



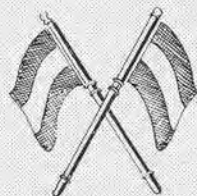
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SUMMER

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THE MAGAZINE
OF THE
ROYAL NAVY'S
COMMUNICATIONS BRANCH





FAR EAST

H.M.S. GAMBIA

Much water has passed under our keel since our last contribution to the Magazine and for many of the staff lots of new places have been visited. At the time of starting this article we find ourselves en route for the stricken island of Mauritius, no doubt familiar to many of our readers.

This present trip has, of necessity, brought about the cancellation of our projected visit to Singapore and Hong Kong and consequently a new theme song to the department, "Oh Carol". But to move back to events of the past three months.

Last November saw the end of our stay in Gibraltar, and for most of our staff a very welcome spot of leave to the U.K. which amply compensated for the rigours of weeks of watch-keeping. Others of the staff went off to such places as Spain and Tangiers while for the remainder of us it was work as usual. The period of leave saw two members of our staff married and with the happy prospect of at least six months in foreign waters.

November 28th found us on our way to Volos in northern Greece for a memorial service at the graves of 17 Royal Marines of *Devonshire* who lie buried there after a turret explosion in 1929. Sir Roger Allen, the British Ambassador to Greece and Lady Allen were embarked off Piraeus and the Pipe Band of the First Battalion, The Black Watch transferred from the R.F.A. *Brown Ranger* for the occasion. The ceremony over, and the visit a great success, we were then on our way to the canal, transferring our friends of the Pipe Band to the *Blue Ranger* en route.

Our transit of the Suez Canal was lengthened by a sandstorm which caused us to tie up for most of the day, but early the next morning we were out into the Gulf of Suez and off to Aden. Halfway down the Red Sea we met our predecessor on the Far East Station, *Ceylon*. A quick flash by and cheer ship and once more we were by ourselves.

One day out of Aden our ever alert V S staff observed a signal on the masts of Abu Ail lighthouse to the effect that they needed assistance. Subsequent investigation showed that they were short of food.

They said the replenishment ship had not put in an appearance for roughly two months. We landed a quantity of stores to tide them over, the most grateful member of this little colony being a donkey whose prospect of a long life was dwindling. On arrival at Aden we were given a different story by the Port Authorities about their supply situation.

One member of the staff, L.R.O. Turley, the victim of a recurrent slipped disc was left ashore at the R.A.F. hospital and has now been flown home. (No relief yet. Draffie please note).

From Aden we moved on to Mombasa having sampled the untold "joys" of a visit from the Ruler of the Deep and his court and, as befits such an occasion, our Captain was the first to go into the tank, fully booted and spurred.

Mombasa added yet another triumph to the many already gained by the ship. The hospitality of the people of Kenya over the Christmas period was something that has to be experienced to be believed, as many members found. With visits to Nairobi, beach parties and sundowners, the visit was long to be remembered. Again we found another mountaineer in our midst; L.T.O. Hardman was one of a party led by the famous Himalayan climber, Captain Mike Banks, R.M., to scale Mount Kilimanjaro. From sea level to over nineteen thousand feet in four days, all carrying their own packs is no mean feat.

From Mombasa to Dar-es-Salaam, Haven of Peace, for the New Year and as regards shore sides it was the same as Mombasa. Some of us did go "up-country" to Morogoro and Kilosa for a riotous three days.

Then the Seychelles. The only place in the world where the famous double coconut, the coco de mer, is grown. Apart from hours spent in "Sharkies" bar very little can be said of this visit, although if the truth was known a certain R.S. may have a merry tale to tell.

Karachi; three weeks for self maintenance. For information to future ships when visiting, your first signal when connected to the shore telephone should be "Have closed down on Broadcast VA. Last number received . . . 2. Challenge you hockey".

We lost to them, but they would also like to play any Comms. side at football and waterpolo. For those who remember our friend Kay Hunt I should like to take this opportunity to inform them that she is in very good health and as charming as ever. She would like to pass on her kind regards to all her old friends in various parts of the world. We hope to see you again Kay.

For anyone who remembers P.O. Tel. Aphorpe, he too is in good health and is now in the employ of the Canadian High Commission in Karachi.

Unfortunately our visit to Bombay, the Gateway to India, was cancelled and instead we called at Colombo to embark Mr. Alport, the Minister of State for Commonwealth Relations, the U.K. High Commissioner to Ceylon, Sir Alexander Morely and members of their staffs to go to the Maldives for the signing of the new thirty year agreement over Gan. The official signing took place at the capital Male. But first a call at Gan to embark CINCFEAF, Air Marshal the Earl of Bandon and the R.A.F. Pipe Band, truly we are a Scottish cruiser.

The formalities over we were off to join exercise "Jet". Plenty of work to shake us out of our normal cruising state and plenty of opportunity to meet old friends again in Trinco afterwards.

Trinco saw the addition of a new member to our needy V S staff in the shape of a monkey. T.O.2. Whinney is the owner (the likeness is remarkable). Incidentally he is turning into a good signalman, tears up any signal he can find—the monkey I mean.

The end of "Jet" saw the annual regatta for cruisers at Trinco with *Gambia* setting a new record by winning every race going. We are happy to say that our staff's crew had the second best time for the course. Beaten only by the racing whaler's crew. But with two Fleet cocks proudly displayed our joys were short lived. The news of Mauritius arrived at one o'clock in the morning and we were underway at 0430. Taking only five days to cover the 2,293 miles we arrived breathless but ready to tackle any emergency.

Communicators with portables were spread around the island with working parties acting as radio links with the ship—that is when they weren't unwrapping themselves from concrete pylons or carrying out free descent trials from the top of Rocky Signal Hill—plenty of Giles cartoon material there and more so when the ship's company discovered the uninhibiting effect of the local sugarcane brew.

The cadets of the French cruiser *Jeanne d'Arc* who were also giving assistance to the Mauritians, challenged us to a grand finale soccer match prior to both ships departing, they beat us 2-0 but we won the impromptu drinking match which followed.

After a long trek to Singapore we re-established relations with the mystic East and Kranji W/T and so far we have had no complaints about leaving their fridges empty.

Escaping North to Hong Kong with all its

pleasures, a quiet twelve days were spent climbing out of San Miguel bottles and falling in love with the original Suzie Wong. Where is the Luk Kwok anyway? Most of the 'sparkers left their hearts there and one R.S. is developing almond shaped eyes—he tells us it's through watchkeeping, though we are not sure of the frequency. As a parting gesture we trounced *Tamar* Comms. 5-1 at soccer.

Returning to Singapore for a maintenance period the P.O.s hid themselves at "Malaya" while their Mess was sprayed out—with a mixture of paint and Tiger by their bleary eyed appearance. Meanwhile the ever energetic Comms. soccer team beat Kranji 8-0 only to let them redeem their confidence by losing 8-1 at the return match.

One morning to our amusement, we found the Buffer muttering something like "They should be in balls and chains" as he supervised the crew of H.M.A.S. *Queenbrough* removing slogans they had painted on our ship's side over night. We weren't so amused, however, when we discovered an Australian ensign flying from our foremast—great jokers then kangaroos.

Leaving Singapore homeward bound (the long way) we tested our paying off pendant, and somewhere orbiting the globe, with the satellites, should be about 20 foot of it. An error of either not enough balloons or too heavy a pendant.

Re-crossing the Indian Ocean stopping to re-fuel at Mauritius we arrived in the land of "Grippo Hippos" and took a tight stranglehold on the citizens of Durban. For those who have already run or staggered around the Cape no more need be said. The population made us very welcome indeed and *Gambia* surely carried out the duties of Britain's little ambassadors with full protocol. At Port Elizabeth, the Flagdeck Yeoman ever with an eye on Herbert Lotts Bounty devised a revolutionary idea to replace the small brass ships used on manoeuvring boards. One of our golfing sparkers returned from tearing up the greens, with three tortoises. They are now being taught basic Fleetwork but lack imagination when "following in the wake".

The sea and the Gunnery Officer both served to remind us during the two-day trip to Capetown that there are more things in life than wine, women and song.

At Capetown, and once more having a maintenance period, though by this time we don't know who needs it most the ship or the men; here we experienced more hospitality. After seven days we threw in the towel and steamed Northwards for Freetown. Two days after leaving we had cause to avail ourselves of the excellent port to port radio service maintained by the Union Ports when we had an A.B. who was suffering from a perforated duodenal ulcer and required landing for an emergency operation. Doctors and equipment were assembled by the time we arrived at Luderitz, and the operation successfully performed within a few hours. After Freetown we called at Bathurst and

Gibraltar—must get in those last few rabbits—then it's first the Nab, then the Warner, Fort Blockhouse and Fountain Lake Jetty for us with 20 days leave each watch before joining up with Home Fleet once more. We lose C.C.Y. Tibbs then and C.Y. Smith and welcome C.Y. Stockwell and the new C.C.Y., whoever he may be. T.O.2 Whinney somehow managed to save enough money to purchase his discharge (now that he doesn't have to buy food for his monkey).

Buzz has it that we shall be wearing the Flag of F.O.F.H. We look forward to it as we did before.

HONG KONG

Having received my Easter edition on the tenth of June and final entries for the Summer edition being required by the twenty-seventh I haven't much time for thought. So let's get at it.

This article follows close in the wake of a visit from "Bloody Mary". This woman gave us a performance that reminds us that nature is equally, if not more, destructive than a conventional bomb. "Mary" was the name given to the recent typhoon which lashed our shores. Winds of up to 105 knots and rain of the order eleven inches in eight hours caused numerous disasters. Two large vessels, the S.S. *Ben Hant* and S.S. *Taiping* broke loose and made the harbour a dangerous place. The S.S. *Malayan Fir* contrary to all orders became almost air borne and did eventually touch down on the side of Kai Tak runway. One S.O.S. was answered by *Torquay* and the rescue of 53 persons was effected from the stricken S.S. *Shunlee* lying breached on Pratas Reef. Trees of great size were whisked out of the earth and others snapped like matchsticks. One of GZO's adastras was felled bringing with it its wirey burden and managed to earth all but four of our receiving aerials. Stonecutters could not keep up with our transmitter requirements as they were awash underfoot. Our teaboard was buried and the paper store was breached by the same landslide. With the above and our shortage of staff, due to being stranded over Kowloon side "Minimise" was enforced. As a direct result of the storm 18,200 people were rendered homeless on the first day after the storm, and the total dead now stands at 45, many of these were from Cheung Chau, a small village through which the eye of the typhoon passed. At this stage, as P.O.O.W. at the time I would like to convey our thanks to the R.I.C.s of both *Torquay* and *Reliant* for taking control on W23B so readily and speedily when GZO became incapacitated.

What else of Hong Kong? Since the last edition our sailors, namely the 120th M.S.S., in the company of *Crane* have visited Manila for exercise "Sea Lion". The trip was no mean feat for I.M.S.s. The Flotilla consists mainly of R.A.s and I understand they would sooner have stayed at home.

Fourteen days away from the missus and they complain—ah well, perhaps 'Old Jack' ain't what



he used to be. The local craft from Manila, much to the disgust of our professionals managed to get tangled round a moored buoy which they had tried to sweep.

Our dreary existence was recently highlighted by a visit from the Fleet in the form of *Albion*, *Melbourne*, *Belfast*, *Vendetta*, *Queenborough*, *Cavendish*, *Caprice*, *Cardigan Bay*, *Crane*, *St. Brides Bay* and four R.F.A.s. Though the exercise had ended a fortnight before, the tension between heads of departments was evident when doing the rounds at eleven a.m. Now they are all north in the Japanese stamping grounds and giving us a satisfactory turn over on ship-shore. For keeping a tally on S/S, the chief started keeping charts of the day's takings. He'd probably read that all good bosses do this because it is the efficient and correct thing to do. The competitive spirit of the operators soon shot the chief down in flames. A new peak was set daily and eventually chief's charts were left untouched as the coloured lines were more off the paper than on.

To all that have been here, and all that expect to come, the watch composition remains the same. R.S.O.W., Killick, two ROs, three L.E.P.s and a dayman seaman, S.D.N. operator.

The buntings are as equally busy as the sparkers. With the Fleet in so close a proximity they are kept at it and it looks like they will stay at it indefinitely, for soon after the Fleet moves south again preparations for the November regatta will begin. The buntings have a complaint though; recently we were modernised with ultra modern equipment and where the old T.P.s chattered the new ones do not make sufficient noise to wake the sleeping M.S.O.

The face of Hong Kong changes. The demolition of the dockyard is almost complete. The new *Tamar*

I.M.R.C.

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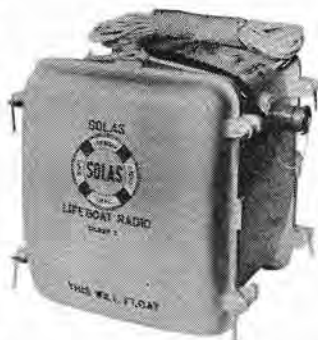


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wall is almost finished and shows us just how big an Establishment we can anticipate. It will be some one third the size of the present bounded area and I understand when completed, will boast a seven a side soccer and a hockey pitch on the parade ground, swimming bath, basket ball and tennis courts.

Perhaps we that are here now may return at a later date to benefit from its facilities. At the moment sport in the present Establishment is sadly lacking. This I feel is partly due to the season, the hot rainy season. Most of the communication sports effort goes to the Communicators' bowls evenings when we take on "all comer" teams of sixteen. Evenings are often arranged for the benefit of visiting Communicators to give them a night out. In this field after our Gladstone Trophy win of last November, C.Y. Charles won the Rediffusion Individual Open Championship held under the magic eye of television. When the Fleet was in, the joint Chiefs and P.O.s mess gave a stag night for the visiting senior rates, a large number of whom I am pleased to say were Communicators. Stag jokes and heavy drinking were the order of the day and the evening was highlighted, to the delight of all, by a belly dancer. My picture shows Miss "Wanchai Follies" in the midst of her gyrations.

H.M.S. HIGHFLYER

H.M.S. *Highflyer*—"Ceylon West" or "GZP" to you—is the Navy's largest Wireless Station abroad—any challengers? It consists of the Receiving Station at Welisara, ten miles north of Colombo and the Transmitting Station a further nine miles to the north. The total area of both Stations comprises over four hundred acres—larger than the Alma Mater herself, and existing on them will be found six officers, a hundred and twenty sailors (including over eighty Communicators) and fifty wives plus attendant children. In addition there are a hundred and fifty Ceylonese employed here and the careful observer will also see some chickens, turkeys and a fluctuating population of dogs, cats, and goats: altogether quite a community. What do we all do? Next question please.

We can't excite your palate with a fascinating cruise programme, but I expect our many and faithful old boys will be interested to hear what is going on. Since the last COMMUNICATOR we have actually had to do some work! To start with, in December, when you lucky people were enjoying your leave, we were extremely busy with all the "Happy Christmas, Mum" telegram traffic. In fact, we passed on well over ten thousand greeting telegrams from ships at sea during the month. We hardly had time to recover from all this when we found ourselves in the thick of "Jet 60", the largest Jet yet, and our exercise lasting all February in which all the Commonwealth Countries east of Suez took part. Naturally we ran the communications and were particularly busy during the last ten days when all the ships were in and around Trincomalee. During

this period we had fifteen Royal Ceylon Navy operators working with us and very well they did too.

On the social and sporting side we have had our ups and downs. A large "up" was the expedition last week, when the First Lieutenant, Lieut.-Cdr. Hopkin, led sixteen stalwarts—and a stalwartess—on a night climb of Adam's Peak, a mountain nearly eight thousand feet high, and a Mecca for Buddhist and Hindu pilgrims—and foolish sailors!

Our soccer team is having a bit of a down at the moment—in fact one or two visiting ships, including H.M.S. *Carysfort* and H.M.S. *Alert* have had the effrontery to defeat us on our home ground. However the Commanding Officer with his "cripples" held the Kotugoda "crocks" to a draw last month and has high hopes of leading his team to victory before he leaves in June.

H.M. S/M AURIGA

The arrival of the Easter COMMUNICATOR reminded us that we had not been forgotten. At the moment we are the only R.N. ship stationed in Halifax N.S. and are inclined to feel a little neglected at times.

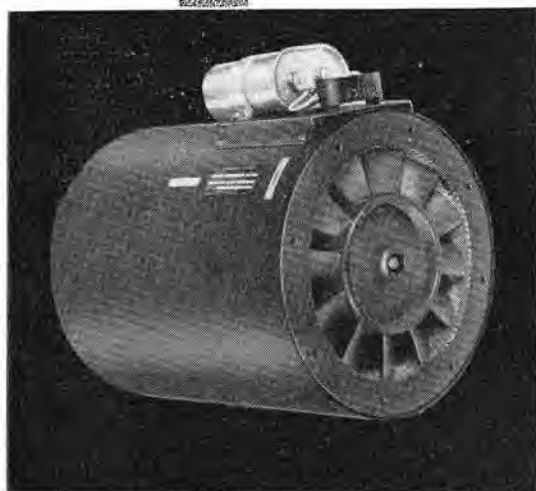
However, we have a great deal of work to keep us busy, and most of our days are spent at sea. We are hoping to have the pressure of work relieved somewhat by the arrival of *Aurochs* early in July, and she will receive a very warm welcome from us in the hope that we will then be able to visit some of those fabulous American ports that we have heard so much about.

The object of our presence here is to provide both submarine and anti submarine training for the R.C.N. and R.C.A.F., and not as one wag said "to win all the soccer trophies in the American Maritimes". Modesty forbids me to quote the number of miles steamed or goals scored in carrying out these jobs but both figures are quite impressive.

At the present time we are high and dry on the slips with dockyard people climbing around and causing the inevitable chaos. We are hoping to be cleaned up and ready for Halifax Navy Days in two weeks time, when we shall be giving a demonstration dive in the harbour. As a matter of interest the Canadian Navy are celebrating their 50th Anniversary this year, and of course we are celebrating with them (we are having to, we're outnumbered).

We are looking forward to an unusual event taking place in July when we shall be going to sea and diving with ten Canadian Wrens on board. We are hoping that there will be some sparkers amongst them and that we'll have the day off.

Before signing off we would like to offer our greetings to all other submarine communicators and don't forget to keep a billet open for us in Block-house, we'll be back.



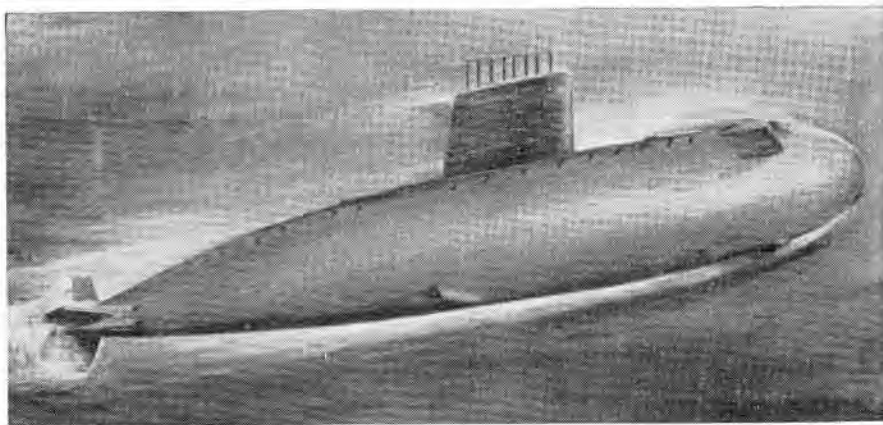
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Our role as a Commando carrier can truly be said to be a challenge to the Communicators, since allowance has to be made for nearly every form of transmission and reception.

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Helicopters and

Ground (Commando) —using U.H.F. and H.F. nets

Commando H.Q. —using H.F. or possibly V.H.F. nets.

In addition to these, provision must be made for

S.A.C.C.—incorporating the A.C.T. and the N.G.S.F.O.—have you ever read the revised doctrine on this Black Art?—together with the Special Boat Section, Landing Craft, crash boat, the Monster Met, and possibly even Brigade communications. Not bad for a two line ship!

We stock a vast range of military portable equipment and because all sets in our organisation have to be crystal controlled, this air conditioned supermart provides seventy-two crystals for each frequency allocated. It has been suggested that Royal Marine signallers should be issued with crystal pouches in lieu of ammunition.

As you can see, such a combined complan offers rare opportunities for any Communicator to work study.

We have a Commando S3 in each M.S.O. watch and there are others serving their apprenticeship in the B.W.O. Meanwhile, not even the expense of a pair of Pusser's boots after forty-eight hours with the N.G.S. team in the desert has deterred R.O.s from landing with the Commando.

So far our interests in the sporting field have been mainly on the soccer side, with the losses far outnumbering the wins. L.R.O. Hughes now lays the blame for the increase in grey hairs to the fact that it takes him longer to work out subs for the players



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than it does to pick the team and play the match. Our best turnout to date was our game against *Highflyer* 2nd XI and this we managed to win at the cost of a few poisoned knees and a couple of twisted ankles. I must say though that these injuries were due solely to our own exuberance as we were once again playing on grass quite a change from the North African coast and Corradino.

I wish we could say that we also beat Kranji but it was a sad day for us, leading at half time only to go down by the odd goal in five. Methinks our next match will probably see the inside forward trio of C.R.S. Jock Wilson, R.S. Armitage and C.C.Y. Page.

On the cricket pitch our first match is yet to be played, but the C.C.Y. and R.S. Wenn have taken part in a ship's trial. Deck hockey is more than a must in this carrier and it is the first we have heard of restricted choppers' test flying because the Commanche Reservation were holding their basketball and deck hockey leagues. Our most prolific deck hockey ankle cracker is C.Y. "Scrubber nut" Green followed closely by C.Y. "El Presidente" James. Brave stokers and naval airmen have been seen to retreat in complete disorder from these two warriors.

Basketball, I'm sorry to say, is still a mystery to the elder brethren—we have a team, of course, but for the record played one, lost one. Oh well, just wait till we learn the rules. I did intend to mention circuit training, but this will have to wait until the next issue; suffice to say that it is the solution to the advert "He kicked sand in my face". The Brewery ashore can rest assured that the Tiger training will continue.

H.M.S. ALBION

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter . . ." as Keats (I hope) once wrote. The *Albion* melody has so far been unheard—and unwritten, but it is a far cry from contemplating the beauty of a Grecian urn to studying the activities of one of the Aircraft Carrier Squadron, and it is high time that we broke silence to let you know how we have been getting on.

When the last of our predecessors had stumbled happily on their way still burbling about Sydney, Cape Town, Rio and other unheard-of places, we turned to at the beginning of last October to find out how to communicate in and from a carrier. This was made no easier by the three-day camel ride necessary to get from the B.W.O. to the L.R.R. (some people are still trying to find a camel). However, it does keep one fit. Several months passed happily away in the tranquil atmosphere of Pompey Dockyard, until one morning we were horrified to find the ship surrounded by water and actually afloat. Our commissioning ceremony took place just before the Christmas leave, and soon afterwards the great day came when we went to sea. Shake-downs and -ups came and went and we embarked our aircraft, which completely wrecked the

lawn and flower beds which had been lovingly planted on the flat roof. And then we were off to Gibraltar in mid-February. Here our work-up started, and continued into the Med, with a little time off for week-ends in Marsaxlokk and Messina. A maintenance period in Grand Harbour happily coincided with the Communicators' Conference in the ballroom of the Phoenicia Hotel, which produced many unusual sights, and proved that dancing on ground glass is a difficult art.

After the work-up we embarked the Flag Officer Aircraft Carriers and sailed for Piraeus toward the end of March. On the way we assisted the Army with their exercise "Starlight", and received our Operational Readiness Inspection from F.O.A.C. At Piraeus we were honoured by a visit from His Majesty King Paul, the first visit by the King of Greece to a British warship since the end of the unfriendliness over Cyprus. From Piraeus to Port Said and thence through the Suez Canal at the beginning of April, where we found that the canal bank was not as soft as we had expected, and so to Aden where F.O.A.C. left us for *Centaur*. We had expected to see something of *Centaur* before she went home, but unfortunately we had to dash on to Singapore and so missed our turn-over. The dry dock there welcomed us with open jaws on 14th April, and the whole of the ship's company were soon comfortably ensconced in *Terror*, with the exception of a few, including some Communicators, who occupied a desirable semi-detached residence by the dockside.

There followed an intensive two-week course of acquaintance with Anchor and Tiger, Chinese chow, cheong-sams and the like, and some of us had the opportunity of visiting that famous outpost of Empire, Kranji W/T Station. At the end of April we sailed for Manila in preparation for exercise "Sealion", the annual S.E.A.T.O. exercise which lasted for two weeks and which ended with a congregation at Singapore of all the ships which had taken part. During this exercise we wore the flag of F.O.2, F.E.S., our first experience of being a flagship in a fleet exercise—and indeed our first experience of a big exercise this commission.

At the time of writing we are just coming to the end of a cruise which has included visits to Hong Kong, Inchon in South Korea, Yokohama and Yokosuka. We were looked after by the U.S. Army to a large extent at Inchon, which is in fact a U.S. Army port, and both the British and American communities did a great deal to make our visit most enjoyable. At Yokosuka we had the experience of a self-maintenance period in a U.S. Navy yard, and were most impressed by the amenities available in the Base. There is no doubt that the Americans of all ranks and rates have gone out of their way to make us feel at home, and a firm liaison has sprung up between members of the Base personnel and the U.S. ships in harbour.

We are now looking forward to returning to Hong

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Kong and Singapore, after which our programme is somewhat obscure. However, we are unlikely to encounter any cool weather again for several months. It is hoped that by the time the Christmas number of the Magazine appears we shall be very much nearer home.

H.M.S. CENTAUR

With *Centaur's* present commission nearly completed this article now becomes our swan song, and we leave it to our successors to continue the good work. Our commission has included a very eventful and happy trip around the world, and we have clocked up some 82,000 miles so far.

Most of our staff were extremely sorry to say goodbye to Australia early in January, when our final call was made at Fremantle, as like our other Australian visits, this port extended a terrific welcome to us, and hospitality which will long be remembered. Our five week tour around Australia made us very many friends whom even today, by mail observations, are still in contact with the ship and perhaps some of the new *Centaur's* may benefit from this.

The Indonesian port of Surabaya was our next stop but only for three days and only the lucky few were allowed ashore, because we were anchored some 25 miles out. Most of the sightseers appeared impressed by the dockyard and Indonesian naval personnel, and enjoyed their well organised but heavily escorted hospitality. Whilst leaving Indonesia, we were interested to see one of their Russian-built "Skory" class destroyers pass us at high speed, and quite impressive it looked too.

A short stay at Singapore again provided us with a self-maintenance period, an opportunity for our last wash and brush up, and a last chance to say goodbye to our friends who had done so much to make our stay in the Far East so enjoyable, particularly ashore.

Mid-February saw us on our way to our second "Jet" of the commission. The exercise was no novelty to *Centaur*, as we had taken part in "Jet 59" as well, but as usual the brunt of work fell upon the communication department. With our previous experience of fleet exercises in May, however, we were able to take it all in our stride including the busy week-ends in Trinco as well, while we hope, our many Indian and Pakistan oppo's who came to sea with us managed to learn something of carrier communications.

It was during "Jet" that we said goodbye to our escorting destroyer squadron, the 1st D.S., with the exception of *Lagos*, who stayed as our plane guard to the bitter end. The lucky 1st D.S. then proceeded ahead of us by three weeks to a well deserved leave in their home ports and momentarily we thought that second leave was not best.

Leaving Trinco, *Centaur* sailed in company with the Indian Fleet for Cochin and we had the pleasure of wearing the flag of F.O.C.I.F. for a short period,

which added yet one more admiral who has flown his flag in the ship. Berthing a carrier in Cochin is no easy task and possibly this was a trial so that the new Indian carrier, due in 61/62 may benefit from the difficulties involved. Those who have been to Cochin will realise there is little to do in this naval port, except play sports and make one's own entertainment onboard, so with the thought of a trip to Mombasa it was no wonder that everyone was eager to get to sea again and head still further west. Our trip to this east African port was interrupted by an urgent diversion to the island of Gan, to supply our R.A.F. brothers with some much needed avgas, which they had apparently run right out of. Although a very picturesque place there were no volunteers to stay behind on this remote tropical island. This diversion also caused us to set up a new record of 516 miles steamed in a day.

The hot and sticky conditions in Mombasa took most of us by surprise and we were almost reminded of our trip to the Persian Gulf in the height of last summer. However, some of us were lucky enough to go up country to the coolness of Nairobi or on the slopes of Kilimanjaro, while others spent some very interesting days in the game reserve seeing big game at close quarters.

After Mombasa we said goodbye to all but the *Tidesurge* of our fleet train, and would like to take this opportunity to thank the R.F.A. radio officers for all the ready co-operation they have shown when meeting our communication requirements. By this time it was very evident that *Centaur* had the uncanny knack of doing many things twice and in early April we found ourselves exercising with the R.A.F. and Army in the Persian Gulf again and eventually alongside at Mena-Al-Ahmedi in Kuwait. This proved to be far more pleasant than last time, as the average temperature was in the 70's rather than the 100's and we still wonder how such a small English community manages to entertain so well the many naval vessels which call at this oil company port.

The last stages of our homeward trip included a short stay at Aden and a tense period when it was thought that *Albion's* bump in the canal would prevent us making our target date of April 26th at Plymouth. However, all was well and we sailed from Port Said to Plymouth in eight days, reaching home on time and just within the G.S.C. limit of one year abroad, even allowing for a leap year.

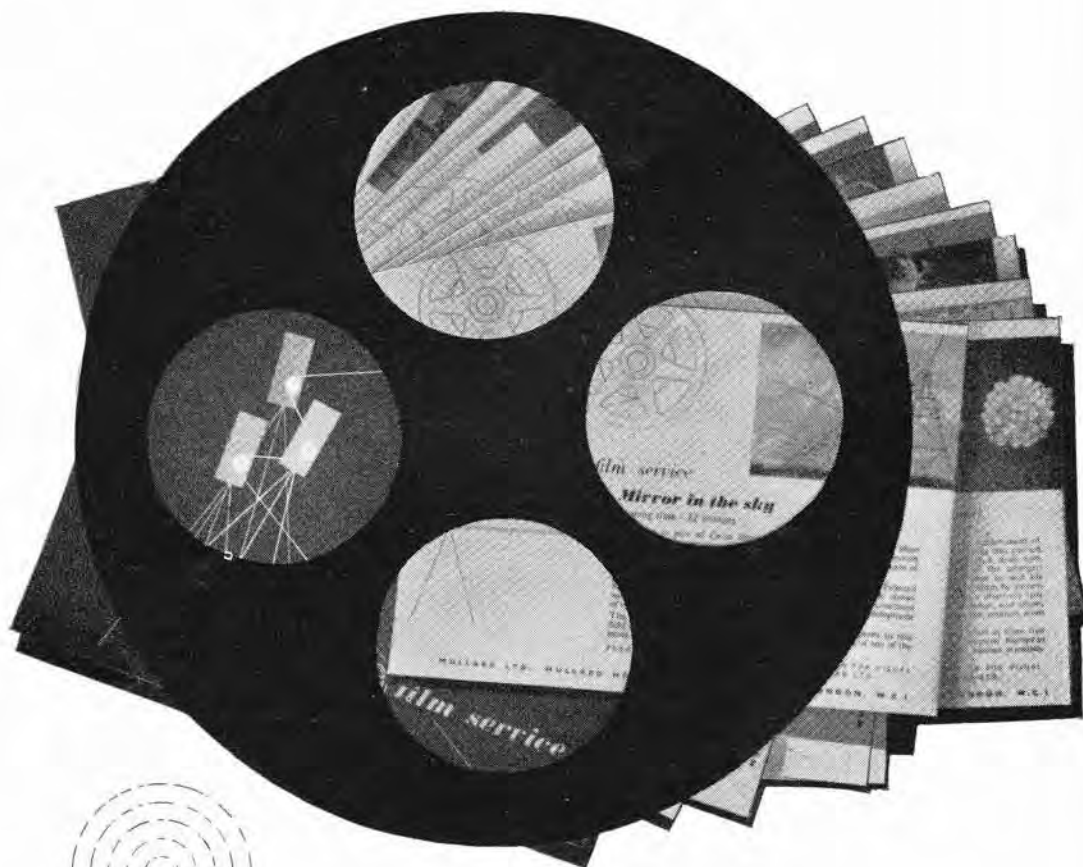
With our successful foreign leg of the commission behind us and just six more weeks sea time to do, which includes a visit to Stockholm, we wish all future *Centaur's* of 1960/61 a similar happy commission . . . join a carrier and see the world.

H.M.S. HERMES

by L.R.O. J. E. Dennis

This is our first contribution to THE COMMUNICATOR and as we are a new ship there will be many more which we hope all readers will find interesting.

Since we commissioned for trials life has been



ELECTRONICS ON THE SCREEN

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rather hectic. When it wasn't hectic it was decidedly boring, there just didn't seem to be any in-between.

We have constantly been surrounded by experts and technicians from A.S.W.E., and other strange sounding departments who are clearing up all the small snags that have cropped up as they inevitably do in a brand new ship.

Tremendous storing programmes seem to greet the ship every time we arrive back in harbour and the Communicators have to supply their fair share of bodies for this work. On the same lines a certain number of Communicators carry out communal duties, which range from Sullage Sentry and Tanky to Commander's Office Writer. For many this is a new experience and our resident Commander's Office Writer was overheard talking of requesting for a new branch badge—crossed type-writers.

Being a fully U.H.F. ship, trouble has been experienced with having only two 86's and 7 V.H.F. lines to man! There is no truth in the statement that our Air Comms. team are going to Hollywood as stand-ins for Yul Brynner.

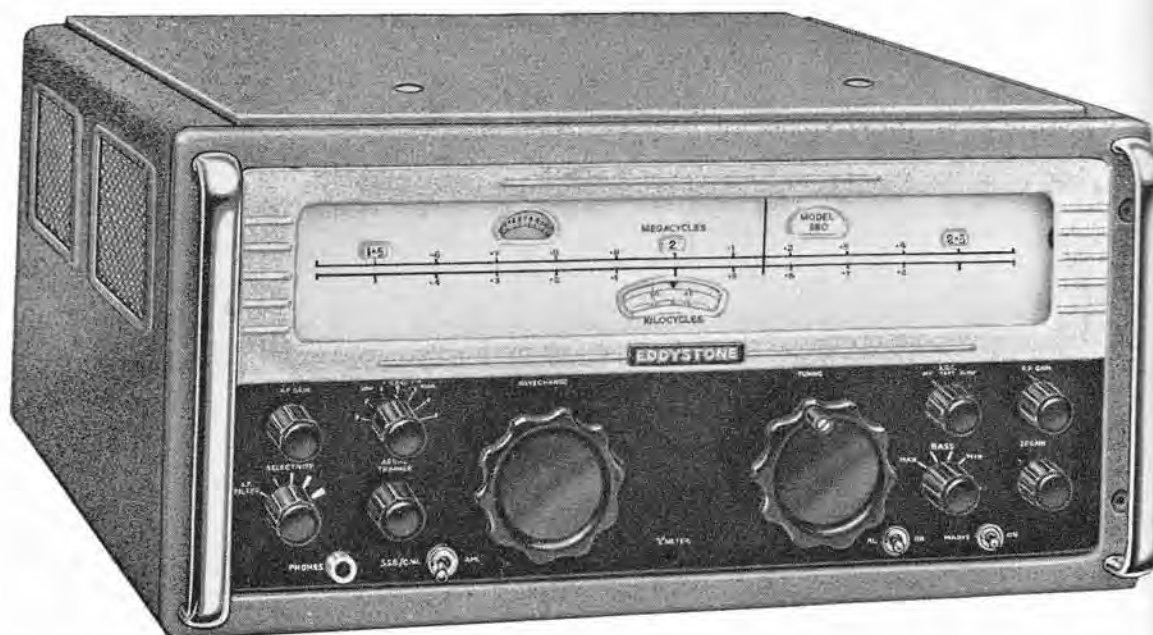
The messdecks are considered to be fair by most members, a bunk each, etc., although one of the first complaints was "Where's the Mess Television set?" The Dining Hall system is being surveyed by a Work Study Team at the moment and they hope soon to cut out all queues.

When the deadlock firings took place, *Hermes*



created a new record without even trying and pretty good results have been obtained in actual flying trials which were completed in May.

As regards sport, nothing outstanding has cropped up yet as we haven't really had a chance to prove our worth. However, R.O.2 McGirr represents the ship frequently at soccer, R.O.3 Harrison at cricket and R.O.2 Rolleston at water polo. In the deck hockey competition the W T staff had three teams and the buntings one. All did quite well although it was overheard that the Flight Deck "Cowboys" slapped in for danger money after playing one of our teams.



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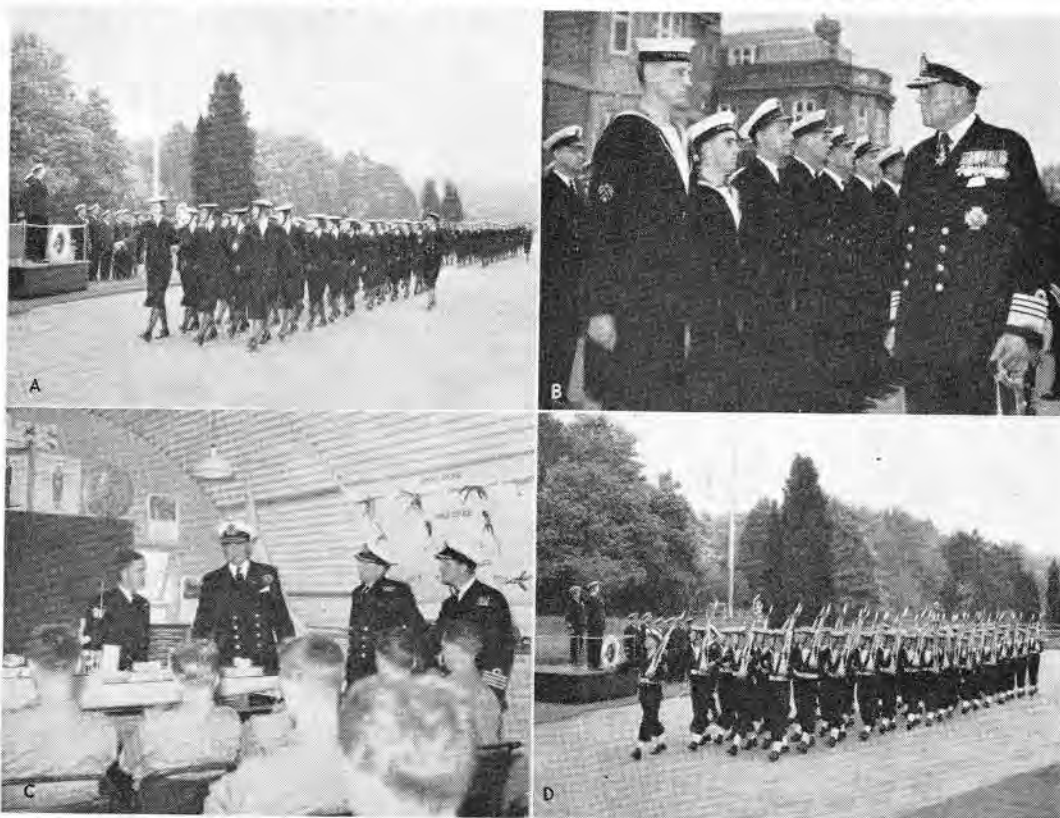
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GOING THE ROUNDS IN "MERCURY"



A. Wrens marching past
C. Visiting a classroom

B. Inspecting Petty Officers
D. The Guard marching past

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S INSPECTION

On Tuesday, 17th May, Admiral Sir Manley Power carried out his annual inspection. Divisions were held in the forenoon, but the 'fun' did not start until the afternoon.

It was a warm day and here and there little groups of people were congregated whilst having a quick Stand Easy smoke. The peace and quiet was soon shattered when the Active Defence Platoon of Green Watch was called out at the rush because an unknown enemy had "blown up" Soberton Towers. There was frenzied activity at the Passive Defence store issuing man packs, spades, picks and shovels. Within a few minutes the Active Defence Platoon of Yellow Watch was called out and issued with rifles to go to Soberton to repel the enemy, and further frenzied activity took place outside the armoury.

The Transport Officer, who was also in charge of the Green Watch Active Defence Platoon, was seen to go grey as all his transport went speeding out of

Mercury, filled with the implements of war and of rescue, followed with great rapidity by Surgeon Lieutenant Doherty and his team of S.B.A.s in the ambulance, with all the necessary paraphernalia to attend the wounded.

Unknown to the rest of *Mercury*, the Active Defence Platoon of the Blue Watch was quietly briefed, armed and sent to Soberton as the enemy.

On arrival at Soberton Towers it was found that there were "injured" on the first floor, on the second floor and on the roof. This caused a little consternation, but help was at hand in the large form of C.P.O. Lacey and his Light Rescue Team. At this time there were over a hundred ratings and nearly all *Mercury* transport at Soberton. The scene, one must confess, was one of great confusion which was not helped by the message that the Commander-in-Chief was on his way to Soberton from *Mercury*.

Inside Soberton Towers there was further great



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activity. Surgeon Lieutenant Doherty and his team were busy setting up a first aid station to deal with the 'wounded' still lying on the first floor, the second floor and the roof.

Outside the grounds, Lieutenant Cobb and his merry men of Yellow Watch had surrounded the church having been told that the enemy were hiding inside. Snipers were placed behind convenient tombstones, and Bren guns positioned with splendid "Arcs of fire" (a phrase borrowed from Whale Island). Alas, the church was empty, the information false. The Gunnery Officer arrived on the scene and informed the Platoon Commander that he was to retire with his troop to Soberton Towers and that the Commander-in-Chief was on his way. The Platoon Commander reorientated his platoon and "took post" (another Whaleyism) at the entrance to Soberton, so naturally the Commander-in-Chief arrived at the exit. However, the Commander-in-Chief seemed suitably impressed on finding his Secretary being held at the point of a bayonet, with his hands on the trunk of a tree, because he had forgotten his identity card.

One cannot say the Commander-in-Chief looked over impressed when on getting out of his car he saw a body on a stretcher about 20 feet above his head and yet another body (this time a Wren) even higher up and he stepped out smartly to the corner of the building, turned the corner only to find yet a third body, this time descending from the roof. As the road was blocked, the Commander-in-Chief just had to wait and see what happened. With great skill the patient was quickly lowered to the ground and within a matter of moments was rushed into the First Aid Centre. The doctor in the meantime had been very busy and when asked for details of his patients later on, gave this sort of report:—"One unconscious man C fractured skull, one compound femur, and one Wren C pelvis". It was observed that the Wrens of Soberton had very kindly laid on cups of tea for the Medical Staff and how quickly they vanished into letter racks as the Commander-in-Chief walked in, though his arrival did not stop the succour of the "wounded".

Outside, matters were a little more orderly as the "wounded" were cleared from their precarious places. But suddenly there was a large explosion. The enemy had attacked with a certain amount of success and at one stage Yellow Platoon Commander was seen to disappear head first into a hedge whence he was rescued by his valiant radio operator who belaboured some enemy tin hats (complete with heads) with the butt of a rifle. However, all things have an end and shortly afterwards the Commander-in-Chief departed. Whew! now to sort things out, when suddenly along the drive, at the double, came the Platoon Commander in charge of the enemy. Very fine timing—everything had finished five minutes before.



Obituary

JOSEPH STANLEY WHITE

It is with deep regret that we must record the death of Mr. J. S. White in May, while serving in *Mercury*.

He joined the Royal Navy in 1913 and served in *Minotaur* during the 1914-18 war, at the end of which he was a Ldg. Sig. After commissions in *Barham* and *Conquest* he was selected for the sailing crew of the Royal Yacht *Britannia* and was advanced to Yeo. Sigs. in 1927. Later he served in *Nelson* and in *St. Vincent* as an instructor and became a C.Y.S. in 1934.

Before being discharged to pension in January, 1938 he was already employed in the Signal School R.N.B., Portsmouth, in the Instructional Production Office, where he continued as a civilian, in due course being promoted to Clerical Officer.

As Training Plans Officer at the Signal School, Mr. White was for many years responsible for resolving the manpower requirements and problems of the Communication Branch. His immense knowledge and experience made him invaluable in this field, and all past and present Communicators have reason to be very grateful to him for his untiring efforts on their behalf.

BOOK REVIEW

TELEPRINTER SWITCHING by E. A. Rossberg and H. E. Korta, both of Siemens-Halske A.-G., Munich. 351 pages, 208 diagrams, plus photographs, 6 x 9 inches, 70/- R. Translated from the German by J. G. Thieme and H. N. Seyringer.

A comprehensive textbook on the planning, engineering and operating of telegraph systems which employ the conventional teleprinter. The principal operating techniques of circuit switching systems and message switching systems, message storing, rate-metering, maintenance, traffic analysis, systems planning, telegraph signals and relays, etc., are fully described. The book covers systems in use in Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Sweden and the U.S.A.

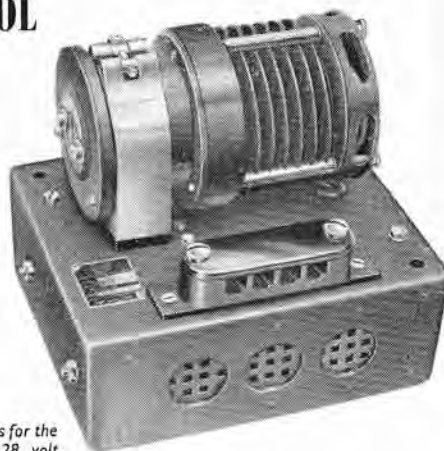


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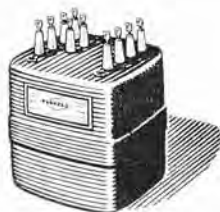
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CHIEFS' CHATTER

The Barbecue this year raised a legal problem—whether a Chief who spends half the night on the Baggage Store shelf and the other half on the ironing table is entitled to hard lying money. As the Baggage Store shelves are slatted he had a bit of hard lying to do when he explained to his wife why his back looked like a waffle-iron.

The R.N.R. Chiefs arrived two days after the Barbecue—cowards!

Would it be unkind to suggest that a certain C.R.S. had been watching too much Flint McCulloch when he spent all the Saturday forenoon scouting the surrounding countryside for his scooter? Especially as it was outside the N.A.A.F.I. at the time.

Chief Tyler's car has a broken back axle. The front axle we could understand but the back is ridiculous. I'm talking about the car, Chief.

C.R.S. Matchett has joined the ranks of the motorcyclists. When he starts up instead of a deep-throated roar the exhaust goes "Cor!"

Whilst congratulating C.P.O. Lacey on being awarded the B.E.M. we would like to scotch a malicious rumour which suggests that the B.E.M. stands for "Broken Ear-drum Medal".

It is not true that "Speaky" Lowe has been drafted to rebuild the Bridge on the River Kwai.

It is not the weather that is causing the living-in members to go around with haggard faces—"Bomber" Wells is back.

It is a sobering thought that both C.R.S. Ferguson and C.R.S. Clifford are going to the same firm when they leave the Service. The firm is in Worcester and that's about as far away from the sea as one can get in U.K.

Since some of the pigs have been moved to the other side of the Broad-Walk opposite the Chiefs' Accommodation Block there have been some complaints—from the pigs of course.

After some of the last German course had tried playing bowls on our sloping green they wondered why the h— Drake should have wanted to finish his game anyway.

The only quiet nights in the Mess these days are Guest Nights. Someone once brought a guest in and messed up the whole routine.

The taps in the cabin that were dripping have now stopped—they couldn't stand the competition.

ARRIVALS: C.R.S. Strong, C.R.S. Roper, C.R.S. Williams, C.C.Y. Andrews, C.R.S. Funnel, C.C.Y. Stubbs, C.C.Y. Chandler, C.C.Y. Durbridge, C.R.S. Stewart, C.R.S. Johnson, C.R.S. Wates, C.R.S. Hotchkiss, C.R.S.(S) Wells.

DEPARTURES: C.R.S. Mansfield, C.R.S. Lowe, C.C.Y. Yates, C.R.S.(S) Smith, C.R.S. Goulding, C.C.Y. Chandler, C.C.Y. Abbott, C.R.S. Ferguson, C.R.S. May.

P.O.s' PATTERN

This has been a remarkable Term for the marriage stakes. R.S. Bowman, R.S. Pitchforth, and P.T.I. Stretton have all succumbed and R.S. O'Brien, P.O. Wilcox, R.S. Mawson and R.S. Green will shortly follow suit.

As this is being written, there's a deathly hush in the Mess as one of the longest standing members prepares to depart for sea. Yes friends, at long last, that man with shares in Don Pinhorn's garage has been drafted to sea. Last full seagoing commission *London*, next commission *Lynx*. No mean feat when one hears C.N.D. vehemently deny that anyone can work a fiddle with the present drafting system. The following signal is being despatched to John Rust in Aden, "FLASH. JAHME REJOINED THE FLEET".

Social life in the mess has been varied with visits to the Sergeants' Mess, Longmoor Camp and R.N.A. Camberwell and "at homes" to the "Bird in Hand" and Camberwell. Impromptu socials are still held periodically, mostly on pay nights, and for a small fee one can hear a rendering of "Lloyd George knows my father" by a certain T.C.I. at 0100 in the mornings.

A BRAVO ZULU to the combined C.P.O.s' and P.O.s' athletic team on being placed second on Sports Day.

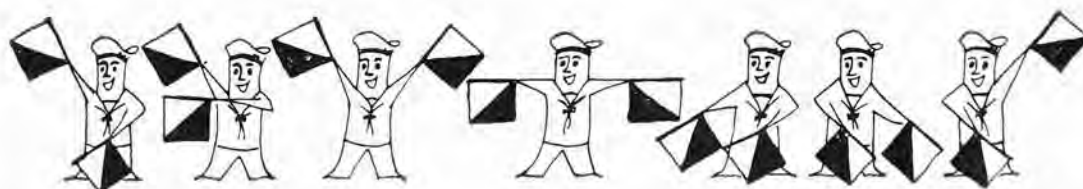
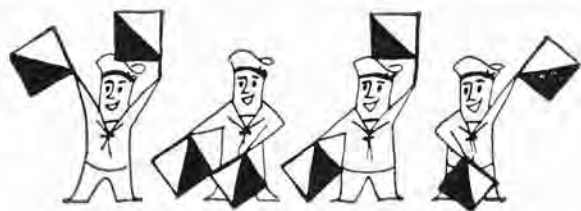
We wish ex-President Keith Smith and ex-Secretary Arthur Ferrer a happy commission in their far flung outposts and extend a hearty welcome to R.S. Ken Pitchforth and R.S. Edward as Pres. and Sec. respectively.

The following conversation was overheard in the Q.M.'s lobby during exercise "Smashex". O.O.W. to very junior R.O.: "You are detailed Tug Party, go away and get your steaming kit". Very junior R.O.: "Where do I draw my steaming kit from, sir?"

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W.R.N.S. NEWS

On 31st March all the W.R.N.S. personnel gathered to say goodbye to First Officer Enid Lewis, W.R.N.S., who was retiring after 18 years service. Her car was suitably decorated with a paying off pennant and a farewell signal was hoisted at the Mainmast as the Wrens dragged her car to the main gate and regretfully sent her on her way.

On 11th June a contingent of 36 W.R.N.S. ratings under the command of Third Officer Warren took part in the Queen's Birthday Parade on Southsea Common.

This year is a special one for the W.R.N.S. which celebrates its twenty first birthday. Although it had existed as a Service during the First World War it was totally disbanded in 1919 and reformed in April 1939.

On June 27th this event will be celebrated by the Wrens of the Portsmouth Command who will attend a special service on board *Victory*; this will be followed by a march past the Lord Mayor and the Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth. At a tea to be given afterwards in the Guildhall, the Director W.R.N.S. will cut a special cake.

SIGNAL SCHOOL MESS

Summer Term started with the usual buzz of inactivity, with everyone getting over the "want to go back home" feeling.

Since the last issue of *THE COMMUNICATOR*, there has been a great change in the Mess. Now we are divided into four Divisions, namely Jackson, Blake, Kempenfelt and Knowles. The two former being for R.O.s the latter for the Miscellaneous (including the Mess Prs.) which leaves us with Kempenfelt; this being for the blind buntings. Someone asked me only the other day what all the white sticks were doing down in the cloakroom. It is all very new at the moment, and like everything else it all takes time to get used to, but as far as the sporting side of the Mess goes, after inter-divisional sports, a good team can be picked to represent the Mess.

The Establishment sports day was held on 15th June, and even the weather was not "typical

Mercury", because the sun shone all the time. The Signal School having the strongest team, was there with the Miscellaneous holding all the others up, but at least we can boast that we won the tug of war for the second year in succession.

As regards the launderette, at least there has been some activity in the basement of Mountbatten Block, even it is only a "matey" digging holes with a windy chisel. As to the completion date, one can only say, "It's in the future".

As usual the camp has been subjected to the usual inspections and it seems Mountbatten Block is the centre of attraction, but with the help of the civilian cleaners we have survived.

We still get plenty of new and old faces coming and going, most of the OLD ones for the last time, on departure day there are tears in their eyes, but one only can suppose they are tears of joy. Still who knows, it may not be long now before I am running round with a chit marked "Victory for release".

So to all Mess members past and present may I say "Have fun" (Hic!) a draft to *Mercury* awaits you sometime, where an E.V.T. course on road sweeping can easily be arranged.

SPORT

Inter Divisional Sports. With the advent of the new Divisional organisation in *Mercury*, very much more activity in the Dog Watches is likely to be seen in the future.

The first of the many competitions planned is under way, namely the softball knock-out, in which ten teams are entered.

Cricket, swimming (using local facilities), soccer, hockey, rugby, shooting, cross country, boxing, and possibly squash and tennis will all take their turn in providing a wide and varied selection of games to be played. In due course we hope to see the completion of the flood lighting for No. 1 tennis court, which should enable us to have some basketball, deck hockey, and possibly five-a-side soccer.

Hyden Wood. The end is in sight, and at this moment the contractors are completing the jumping pits and run ups. It only remains for suitable weather including some rain, a settling down of the water-starved turves, and in October we may at last see the first of our home rugby and hockey games being played on a well drained, and suitably convenient ground. Eventually with the provision of a new Pavilion, we shall be proud possessors of a first class cricket, hockey, rugby and athletic area.

Athletics. This year the Navy will see for the first time R.N. Juniors' and Youths' Championships, which will open up athletics to the young and up and coming athlete who competed as a boy, but who was virtually lost to the Service during the next two to three years because of his age. This new and welcome venture in the naval athletic world had a certain bearing on our Sports Day this year—and with certain other new ideas gave Sports Day a "New Look".

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53 CLARENCE STREET · CHELTENHAM · GLOS.

With the coming of the new inter-Divisional system for sports, the old Signal School Mess as such became four Divisions, and therefore certain eliminations had to take place before Sports Day in order to find a team to represent the Sig. School Mess as such, and the new Knowles Division (Misc. Division). The New Entries also had their own Sports Day which produced some very good times and distances. Athletics activities therefore started very much earlier this year than was hitherto practicable.

There were plenty of entries (except for the obstacle race, despite the added incentive of a special prize given by the President, Captain Henley) and in general the standard was up to previous years if not slightly better in some events.

The families were there in full force, and the children as usual made the lighter side of the afternoon's affair well worth while.

The N.E. Division won the inter-Div. Athletic Cup closely followed by the C.&P.O.s. The tug of war was won by the Sig. School Mess team who reached the final as a result of two walk overs. The final match against the W.R. went to the full three pulls.

Cricket. We are fortunate in having plenty of players to select from this year, so that we have a reasonable side when other duties do not prevent the donning of the white flannels.

We have some very good fixtures too, the outstanding one being a visit by the Lord's Taverners XI on Sunday, September 18th. This will be a charity match in aid of the National Playing Fields Association. As their side usually consists of three or four Test players augmented by stars of the stage, it should attract a large crowd to Broadhalfpenny Down. For those of you in the U.K. at that time "Remember the date—September 18th, 1960, and come and help to make this Charity Match a success".

The Broadhalfpenny Brigand's C.C. continues to play its Thursday evening games and these have proved to be both very pleasant and popular.

Tennis. We have been fortunate this year in having a number of good tennis players.

However, with so many sporting commitments it has been impossible to turn out our best team for every match.

So far we have won 3 and lost 3 matches. Our No. 1 pair Lt. M. Sellar and Lt. R. Baird have won through to the semi-final of the Chilcott Cup.

Swimming. As in previous seasons the distance from Mercury to the local swimming baths is proving a drawback in raising our best water polo team. However, the keen water babies are turning up regularly.

We intend to hold a swimming gala in a few weeks' time in the static water tank behind the Main House. Due to the fact that the tank is very shallow and also that the P.T. store does not possess crash helmets, there will not be any diving. However, it should prove very entertaining, always providing no one removes the plug!

CRICKET

LORD'S TAVERNERS

v.

H.M.S. "MERCURY"

A charity match in aid of N.P.F.A. is to be held on Sunday, 18th September, 1960, on the Broadhalf-penny Down cricket ground, Hambledon, starting at 1.0 p.m.

Formed in 1950 The Lord's Taverners take their name from the Tavern at Lord's Cricket Ground which probably takes second place only to the Bat and Ball Inn at Broadhalf-penny Down as a famous cricket "pub". In the ten years of their existence over £65,000 has been handed to the National Playing Fields Association.

Their Patron and Twelfth Man (and President for this year) is H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh.

Their sides are selected from eminent cricketers and stars of the entertainment world.



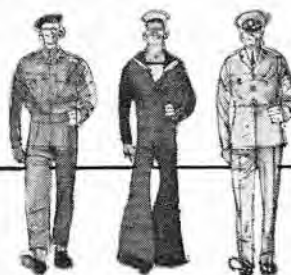
Mrs. Henley presenting prizes

W.R.N.S. During the Summer season Wrens have taken part in tennis, athletics, cricket, sailing and swimming.

The W.R.N.S. tennis team have played friendly matches against neighbouring Naval Establishments and have taken part in the inter-Unit Tennis Tournament. Two trainees, Wren Ireland and Wren Holland, have proved valuable members of the team but unfortunately were unable to enter the Command Tennis Trials because of their training programme. Two members of the team entered the Command Tournament at the U.S. men's ground and Petty Officer Wren Nickson reached the final of the ladies'

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doubles with her partner Petty Officer Wren Gann from *Excellent*. The Portsmouth Command W.R.N.S. tennis team was selected at this meeting and *Mercury* Wrens are represented by two players in the Command team which goes to *Dauntless* in July for the inter-Command Tennis Tournament.

The Wrens took part in a very enjoyable Sports Day in June and it is hoped to enter a relatively strong team for the inter-Unit Competition at Pitt Street in July. One outstanding result on Sports Day was in the W.R.N.S. discus event when Wren McGibney (former Scottish Junior Discus Champion) threw the discus only 18 inches behind the winning men's throw.

Two inter-Unit cricket matches have been played. In the first match of the season *Mercury* had a very good innings against the combined *Excellent* and *Vernon* team when Wren Gill took six wickets, but in the second match against *Victory* we were thoroughly beaten by a very strong team. Friendly matches have been arranged with *Dauntless* and it is hoped they will be played during the Trainees Sports afternoons in July and August. The *Mercury* Wrens team is most grateful to the umpires, groundsmen and Quarters' staff who make the cricket matches at Soberton so enjoyable.

Sailing is a very popular pastime amongst the Wrens. Sailing instruction is given every Thursday at the Sailing Centre, Whale Island and a large number of Wrens go down to enjoy the facilities, to learn about the art of sailing and to sail whalers on the Solent. *Meon Maid II* takes Wrens out for evening sails twice a week and some Wrens are invited to take part in the Ocean going races.

Swimming is organized on Monday evenings at Pitt Street Baths and a team has been entered for the Inter-Unit Swimming Competition.

MERCURY AUTOMOBILE CLUB

Mercury Automobile Club! What's that? Never heard of it! That's what you'll be saying to yourselves and, we who are already members wouldn't be offended or even surprised to hear it as the Club was only born, officially, after the First General Meeting on Thursday, June 16th. Meeting? Well, about thirty of us who are vehicle owners, pillion passengers, hangers-on, lookers-on, critics or just "want to get in on the racket" types, gathered in a convenient lounge and aired our views on what could be done about combining our various talents and become a club.

Amongst the points discussed at this meeting, where Commander The Hon. D. P. Seely took the Chair, were:—

- (a) The aim of the Club. To encourage those interested in any form of motoring to pool their resources, both in vehicles and in experience, for the pleasure of all concerned.
- (b) All those who have a connection with *Mercury*, both naval and civilian, are eligible for membership.

- (c) A badge designed by L.R.O. Steel has been accepted unanimously, and is now in production. This will retail at 26/6d. The colours are: perimeter, grey; background, gold; a black Rod with green Serpents entwined; crossed White Ensign and Chequered Flag; all lettering in black. The badge is made of solid brass and is heavily chromed, and all colours are in baked enamel and protected by a perspex front.
- (d) Rallies—using cryptic clues—(not supplied by "C" Section) and Ordnance survey maps to be organised by a general "work team" as required. Marking will be on a points basis, with handicaps where necessary. Entrance fee to be 2/6d. per vehicle taking part, and the "gate" will be the prize.

Three Rallies have been held to date, No. 1 and 2 being the Chichester/Midhurst area, and No. 3 out Winchester way. All resulted in varying success on the part of the driver/navigator teams, although if anyone meets a red motor-cycle with map-reading passenger (last seen heading south through Waterlooville) would they please inform the Club Sec.

The rules of the Club are being based on a "model" set kindly sent to us by the R.A.C., and it is hoped to have these printed shortly, and that copies will be available for all intending members. Any further enquiries will be very welcome, and should be addressed to the Club Secretary, L.R.O. Steel.

AMATEUR RADIO CLUB H.M.S. MERCURY

During the past six months the amateur radio club has become very popular, with an average membership of 16. Apart from being an interesting hobby it does open up the "lighter" side of a radio operator's job. We have had excellent co-operation from official sources in getting the "Ham Shack" made into a place to be proud of, and all our visitors have left suitably impressed, not only with the operating side but by a pleasant club with good prospects. This has been due largely to the excellent job of re-decorating carried out just before Easter leave.

Conditions on the bands over the last six months have left much to be desired, but we have done extremely well, and have now raised our grand total of contacts to over 100 countries, 69 of these being confirmed, since the club re-opened in July 1958. Many friends have been made in all parts of the world and G3BZU is once again firmly established "on the map" after an absence of five years.

South America has been contacted many times and many Brazilian friends have been made and in

Continued on page 96

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COMMUNICATIONS GAZETTE

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Although every endeavour is made to ensure that the information in this section is correct, we ask readers not to treat it as authoritative in the strict sense.

APPOINTMENTS

Name	Rank	Whence	Whither
R. M. ALLAN ...	Lt.	Mercury	R.A.N. Exch. Svc.
R. A. J. T. ARUNDEL ...	Lt. R.A.N.	Mercury	R.A.N.
H. M. BALFOUR ...	Lt.	Mercury	Flag Lt. to COMNAVNORCENT
H. S. BENNETT ...	Lt.-Cdr.	Lagos	J.S.A.W.C.
G. A. F. BOWER ...	Cdr.	Sea Eagle	J.S.S.C.
H. A. CHEETHAM ...	Lt.-Cdr.	Tangmere	D.N.I.
G. CLARKE ...	Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Heron
C. H. COX ...	Lt.-Cdr. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Malta Comcen
T. F. R. CROZIER ...	Lt.	Mercury	Meon
J. A. N. CUMING ...	Lt.-Cdr.	J.S.A.W.C.	Parapet in cmd.
M. C. EVELEGH ...	Lt.-Cdr.	Staff of C.-in-C. Portsmouth	Staff of F.O.2 F.E.S.
H. D. Y. FAULKNER ...	Lt.	Tyne	Mercury
M. FULFORD-DOBSON ...	Lt.	Mercury	Saker
N. W. HAGGAR ...	Lt. (SD) (C)	Sanderling	Mercury
N. E. C. HAMMOND ...	Lt.-Cdr.	Victorious	Staff of C.A.S.P.G.
P. A. C. HARLAND ...	Lt.-Cdr.	Flag Lt. to COMNAVNORCENT	Solebay
J. A. C. HENLEY, D.S.C. ...	Captain	Mercury in cmd.	Centaur in cmd.
J. B. R. HORNE, D.S.C. ...	Cdr.	Service with Turkish Navy	Staff of COMEDNOREAST
P. N. HOWES, D.S.C. ...	Captain	Capt. (F) Dart. Sqdn.	Mercury in cmd.
D. T. HUNT ...	Lt. R.A.N.	Mercury	Bermuda
D. A. JONES ...	Lt.-Cdr. (SD) (C)	Terror	Fulmar
H. R. KEATE ...	Cdr.	Striker in cmd.	Dieppe in cmd.
W. H. KELLY ...	Lt. S.A.N.	Mercury	S.A.N.
B. H. KENT ...	Cdr.	Staff of C.-in-C. H.F.	A.S.W.E.
N. I. C. KETTLEWELL ...	Lt.	Mercury	Lion
P. T. LAWMAN ...	Cdr.	D.S.D.	A.D.D.W.R.
I. C. MACINTYRE ...	Lt.-Cdr.	C.N.D.	Staff of COMNAV NORTH
P. MARTINEAU ...	Cdr.	Mercury	Staff of CINCHAN
J. C. NEWING ...	Lt.-Cdr.	Staff of COMNAV NORTH	Staff of C.-in-C. Portsmouth
A. C. O'RIORDAN, D.S.C. ...	Cdr.	Temeraire in cmd.	Staff of F.O.2 F.E.S.
J. E. POPE ...	Cdr.	Centaur	Staff of CINCNORTH
C. D. M. RIDLEY ...	Lt.-Cdr.	Troubridge	Staff of F.O.S.T.
I. ROTHWELL ...	S/Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Forth
D. G. SEARS ...	Lt.	Staff of F.O.A.C.	Bellerophon
C. M. SEYMOUR ...	Lt. R.C.N.	Solebay	Staff of C.-in-C. Portsmouth
R. A. STANLEY ...	S/Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Sanderling
MISS D. P. SWALLOW ...	2 O W.R.N.S.	AFNORTH	CINCHAN
D. L. SYMS ...	Cdr.	CINCHAN/ EASTLANT	J.S.S.C.
C. G. TONKIN ...	Lt. (SD) (C)	Heron	Blake
P. P. L. WELLS ...	Lt.	Blackpool	Keppel as 1st Lt.
D. A. WILSON ...	Lt. (SD) (C)	Malta Comcen	Roebuck
A. R. WOOD ...	Lt.	F.C.A. Med.	Mercury

BIRTHDAY HONOURS

C.B. Rear Admiral Earl CAIRNS
O.B.E. Cdr. R. F. WELLS, D.S.C.
M.B.E. Lt.-Cdr. (SD) (C) J. A. J. JOHNSON
Lt. (SD) (C) D. McD. PATCHETT, (Rtd.)

B.E.M. C.R.S. K. G. DENCE
C.C.Y. H. DOWNER, R.N.R.
C.P.O. A. LACEY

PROMOTIONS

To Captain
J. E. POPE

Provisional Selection to Captain
N. E. F. DALRYMPLE-HAMILTON, M.V.O., M.B.E., D.S.C.
The Hon. D. P. SEELY
P. K. WELSH

To Commander
G. A. F. BOWER
P. MARTINEAU

Provisional Selection to Commander
W. T. T. PAKENHAM

To Lieutenant Commander
T. M. LAING
P. R. LEES
H. B. PARKER
R. J. P. W. PERRYMAN
E. S. SPENCER
M. SANDS
J. F. VAN DEN AREND

To Lt.-Cdr (SD)
P. FARRELLY
R. W. WALTON, B.E.M.

To Lieut. (SD)
A. WRIGHT
D. T. MILLS
D. A. WILSON
F. W. C. ENDERS

To A Sub Lieutenant (SD) (C)

D. BEASLEY	D. MACINDOE
P. H. BUCKLAND	T. B. MCLEAN
R. H. W. BUNTING	H. E. MILLER, R.N.Z.N.
G. EVATT	L. W. ORCHARD
R. B. FORWOOD, R.A.N.	G. REED
R. HOLLAND	J. H. STEER, R.N.Z.N.

Radio Supervisor to Chief Radio Supervisor

A. H. COE (31/1/60)	S. A. SYDES (14/3/60)	A. H. FAIRLEY (5/5/60)
G. DIXON (1/2/60)	A. C. BRIGGS (25/3/60)	T. GARDNER (5/5/60)
J. W. EDGE (16/2/60)	T. B. MCLEAN (8/4/60)	J. F. JONES (5/5/60)
C. H. BROWN (28/2/60)	K. S. WOOD (26/4/60)	A. H. PRATT (20/5/60)
A. ABRAHAM (3/3/60)	P. L. NEWTON (3/5/60)	W. H. BURKE (24/5/60)

Communication Yeoman to Chief Communication Yeoman

F. W. JOHNSON (1/3/60) R. N. JONES (1/5/60)

Ce COURSE

MISS J. WATTS-RUSSELL 3/0 W.R.N.S.
MISS J. G. WELLING 3/0 W.R.N.S.

RETIREMENTS

J. ADAMS	Lieutenant (SD) (C)
J. L. BUCKERIDGE, M.B.E.	Commander A.F.O. 1955/57
W. T. RICH	Lieutenant (SD) (C)

MERCURY AMATEUR RADIO—continued

the near future we hope to receive some as visitors to the club. Our contacts with South America now leave us with only Bolivia before we shall achieve our aim of "All South American Countries Worked", when we shall apply for the appropriate certificate to display in the club.

Over the past fortnight regular contacts have been made with the Falkland Islands on fone and many enjoyable Q.S.O.s were had. We have also contacted Australia and New Zealand on fone and as these contacts are very difficult to obtain they are prized entries in the log.

The frequency used for most of these contacts is 21 mcs. for which we have one of the antennas most favoured by Hams, which is the cubical quad, or to the non-initiated who see it displayed over the

shack—the "Spider's Web". The antenna has great directional properties and our 50 watt output gives very good results when competing with the high power rigs used by the Americans. The Americans run up to 2 kw with very large antenna displays and put in fantastic signals to us, but on the other hand we have been told many times that we have the strongest signal out of Europe into the States and South America. We hope in the near future to be able to rotate our antenna mechanically, but at the moment it is fixed and our DX chasing is limited.

At present an endeavour is being made to give a lead in *Mercury* in forming a "Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society" with our club as its headquarters. We hope that all "Amateurs" and those interested in radio as a hobby will join up and help to foster the friendship on the air amongst past and present members of the Royal Navy.

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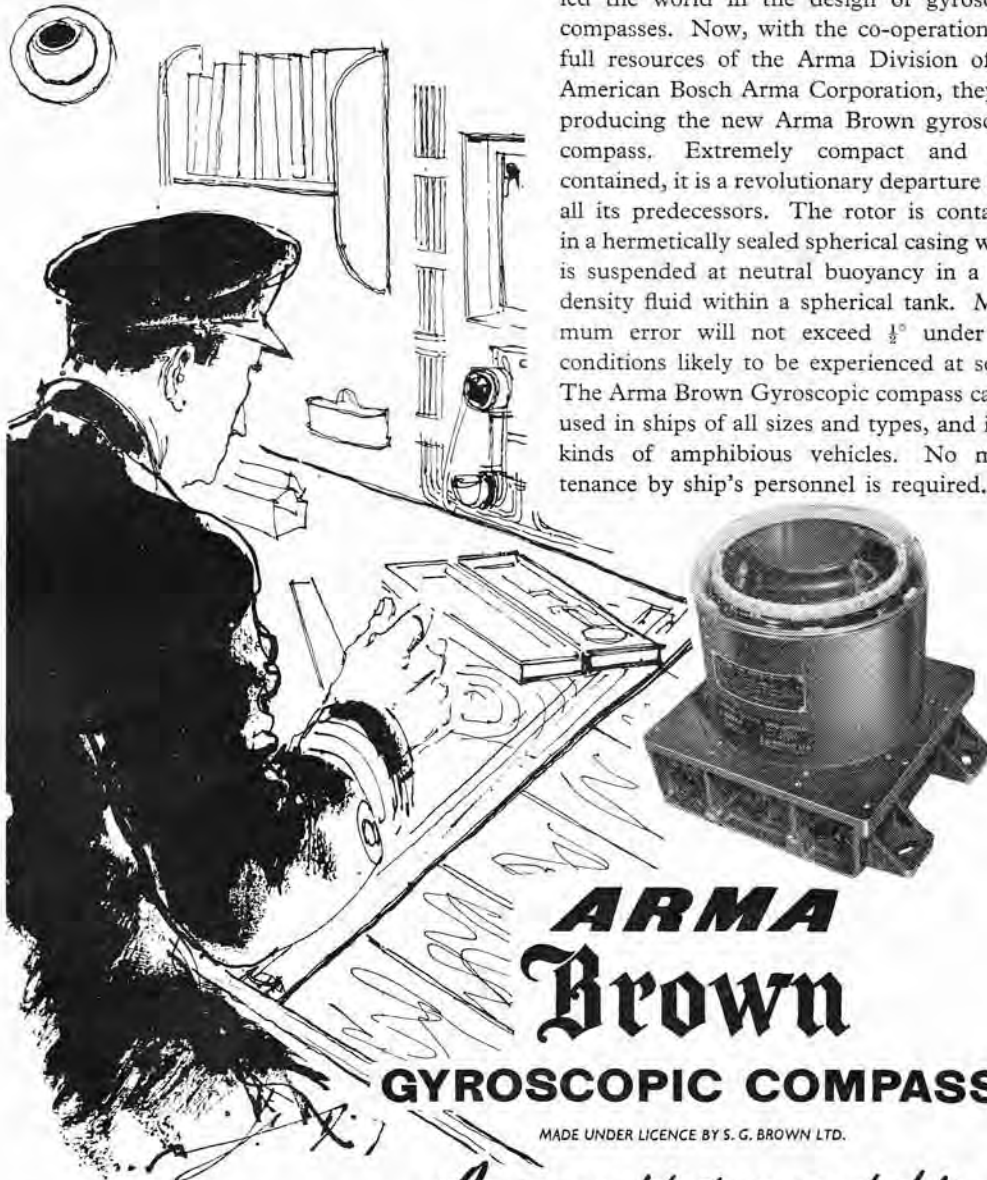
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PORTLAND

During World War II, a need was felt for a base where newly commissioned ships and others having completed refits from the builders could work up into a healthy battle state whilst doing a shake-up or shake-down. (Whichever way you felt about it.) Older members of the Communication Branch will well remember H.M.S. *Western Isles* where Commodore Sir Gilbert Stephenson used to put the fear of the devil into the ships which came under his very expert eye and inspection.

Down here in Portland, a very similar organisation is set up where ships can do their shake-down cruises in the Channel for a week to shake out the cobwebs from the dockyards and to allow the technical gremlins to show themselves prior to removal. Basically a six week course is organised for the ship, where every facet of the Communication, Gunnery, T.A.S., Electrical, Engineerroom and Seamanship departments are carefully observed in action, whereupon the specialist officers and ratings make notes and thereafter begin to iron out the snags and put suggestions for improvements in the various departments.

As we are mostly interested in the Communication organisation I shall endeavour to show how you future candidates for the Sea Training Command can improve your outlook on "the job". First of all, when you get a draft chit to a ship on re-commissioning or on commissioning for trials and services, see that you get the ball rolling for one of the many precommissioning courses for communication ratings. You would be very surprised at the number of Yeomen and L.T.O.s who do not know the occasions when the guide changes automatically, the difference between Operational Speed and Stationing Speed, when ships are to move individually to their station and when to move under the orders of their divisional commanders.

On the other side of the tree, we like to see that all radio operators are able to take a bearing on the FM 12, to do all forms of crypto and to be able to go on the bridge and use a 10 in. lamp, to take a signal by telephone, and rig emergency H.F. and U.H.F. aerials without being chased by the R.S.

Make sure that by the time you start your work-up at Portland you have all your departmental orders written up including all the instructions for disposal in an emergency, and the "exclusive"

rating named in the orders. In fact a good look at the Sea Training Work-up Guide which is sent to all ships before working-up commences, pays dividends on your arrival here. If the senior V/S and W/T rating can manage to pay a visit before arriving in the ship he will find it of immense value.

The Staff C.C.Y. and R.S./R.S.(S) are available to assist ships in their work-up problems, remember we have the experience of dozens of ships as well as knowledge of all their knotty problems—the M.S.O. in "Loch" class frigates is very small, how do we store all the books and logs in that small space?—who looks after the flag deck when the Yeoman is in the ops. room? All these questions and a hundred more are continually being asked by visiting ships, and we think we have the answer to them all.

You will find there is a fairly heavy exercise programme for the Communicators when they are in harbour, most of these are designed to knit the two sub departments into one good communications department. It is not a very satisfactory solution to our problem to have the V/S department a real ball of fire, only to find that when they are at sea, no one tells the W/T office that the replenishing at sea serial with *Black Ranger* finished an hour ago and the W/T office are holding two signals for her and are still diligently guarding Portland exercises net. This could be very trying especially if the signal is a classified one about changes in *Black Ranger's* next serial. While we are on the subject of *Black Ranger* you will find that she is in every respect a very capable communications ship and certainly one of the most well worked-up ships down here.

The Staff C.C.Y. is often at sea in an R.F.A. listening on Tactical Primary particularly during big exercises partly as an adviser to the Master, but more as an observer on ships' progress in working-up. So if during your sea-drills you come across an apparently abandoned tanker in Portland exercise area flying the flag of the United Arab Republic with a signal flying indicating "My crew are on strike and refuse to work", you can stand by to take that vessel in tow. You may get onboard without any trouble but on the other hand you are likely to be met by hostile merchant seamen armed with offensive weapons such as flour bombs, greasy sticks and other difficult obstructions.

When you get back into harbour after a busy day at sea, if you are lucky enough to get a billet alongside the wall, you may find the dockyard workmen getting obstreperous, don't worry, just stand by to land a platoon in aid to civil power (Communications to the front with type 615s). These civil disturbances in the dockyard area are quite a frequent occurrence, they may throw your gangway into the drink, attempt to cast off your mooring wires and ropes, but you will have to cope with them somehow. Your landing party will almost certainly come back onboard much later covered in self-raising flour and much the wiser with dealing in aid to civil power.

Don't think this is a frightening experience to go through like an annual inspection to be dreaded. You will find it extremely interesting, enlightening and well worth the trouble taken to enjoy it. Provided you do your best, the average ship will come through a much better unit at the end. All the senior Communicators admit that when they have done the work-up at Portland, there isn't much for them to fear. They can go away from here quite confident that they can play their part in any command as an efficient unit. Why not—for they have passed out of the most forceful work-up unit yet devised.

We do not spy on ships to report their deficiencies, we are here to help you through a hard period, what better way than by going to sea and putting into practice all we have been learning from the days when we first heard of the Sea Training Command.

Our last item is to remind all senior V/S ratings that Portland is a saluting port, the battery being situated on the old Storehouse Jetty. It appears that several ships in the past have not been aware of this recent addition in A.F.O.s.

To all past graduates of the Work-up Command we hope you found everything well worth while and to those yet to come we bid you welcome.

H.M.S. ROTHESAY

Rothesay commissioned on 23rd April, 1960, at Yarrow and Co., Glasgow, under the command of Cdr. J. B. D. Miller, R.N., who joined us after two years in the Signal Division at Admiralty.

Since commissioning we have been doing acceptance trials in the Portsmouth area and sailed for Portland on 9th June for some more trials. We finally join the mad house at Portland for work up on 22nd June until 5th August when we return to Portsmouth for summer leave.

We are due to sail for the West Indies Station on 7th September and that is our programme as far as is known. Since commissioning we have had one class of R.S. qualifying looking round the ship and, I am sure they were very impressed. The word used by the ship's company when mentioning the W/T office is the "ballroom", owing to its size.

The R.S. who has been with the F.A.A. for nine years is finally back to gens and his latest thought is,

"Help, where did all these books come from!" I understand aircraft have a little book of their own.

The ship is comfortable from all aspects. Messing is modified cafeteria and provides choice of meals, the new scheme is worked onboard with dinner at 1730 in harbour and 2000 at sea. It seems to go down very well and is very different from the old days.

There is an efficient laundry onboard with the same day service and is quite reasonable in its charges.

In these ships the enclosed bridge is a great asset to the tactical department with intercoms to flag deck, ops room, M.S.O., and B.W.O. (C.Y. does not have to get wet now). The M.S.O. is situated opposite the B.W.O. and contains the ship's exchange. This is automatic throughout the ship, but when connected to a shore line, calls must come through the M.S.O.

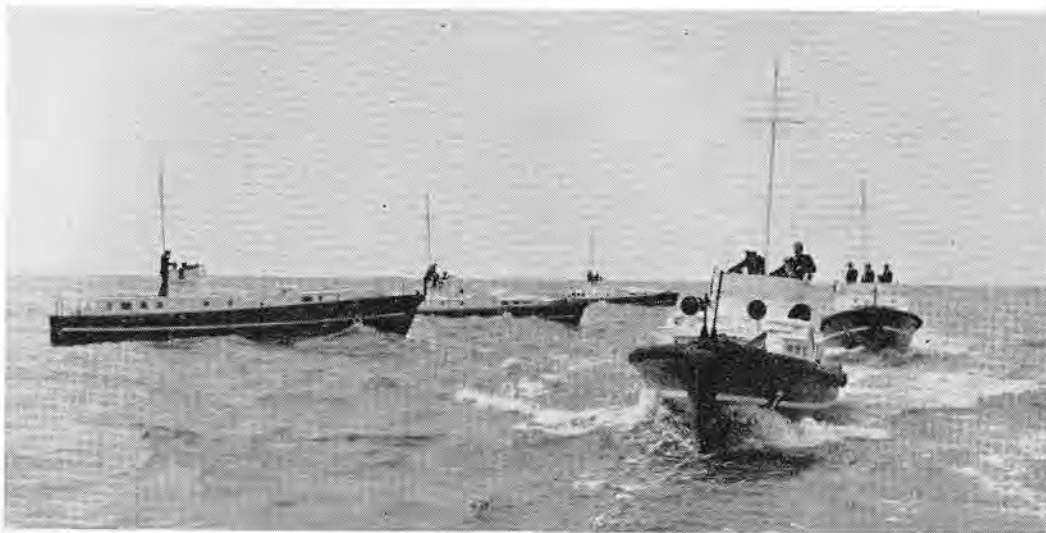
We hope to have some more news for you after our work up.

H.M.S. SEA EAGLE AND J.A.S.S. LONDONDERRY

Although our last article to *THE COMMUNICATOR* got somewhat mixed up with S.T.C. Devonport (Easter 1959), our silence since then does not mean that we took umbrage at this. In fact it is the sad but old story of the detailed volunteers not doing their stuff.

Many changes have taken place in XMHQ Londonderry since then and we doubt if any ex-*Sea Eagle* sparkers would recognize the place now. We have some shiny new equipment, with lots of knobs to be twiddled, and a more sporting chance of hashing things up than ever before. The transmitter station at Killylane has had a facelift and we have an entirely new receiver station at Bolie. Although bristling with security patrols and rifles, Bolie is not manned by any Communication or Electrical Staff, and the receivers are operated from the W/T Office in Londonderry by varying degrees of remote control. With the full remote controls, as given by the Marconi CHA. HF Receivers, we can change frequency, calibrate, select C.W. or Voice, in fact do everything we need, although several miles away from the actual receivers. At the receiver site, common aerial working is employed, using very effective broadband aerials (AGA 1 and AGA 2). All this is assuming that everything is working, which has not always been the case so far. But when it does work it's splendid!

Exercises and courses continue to come and go—so do the Wrens. At present it is difficult to decide whether we are running a wireless office or a marriage bureau! With morse-trained Wrens at a premium we are thinking of drafting an A.F.O. to say that no ex-Telegraphist Wren can get married until after February next year. By then we should be getting the new morse-trained Wren Communicators (M).



BRITANNIA ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, DARTMOUTH

by Lt. I. Fergie-Woods

Some time has elapsed since an article was sent to this Magazine from the Britannia Royal Naval College. We thought it might interest readers to hear about the changing scheme of training at Dartmouth, particularly from the aspect of communications training.

Taking the current scheme first, the course is eight terms long—four terms as cadets, four as midshipmen. The fourth and seventh terms are spent at sea in the 1st Division of the Dartmouth Training Squadron. The last entry for this system arrived in April of this year.

In the first three terms the aim is to level the cadets up to the same academic standard, give them basic training in seamanship, navigation and parade training, and introduce very briefly the professional subjects. We explain in two periods the functions and importance of naval communications. Cadets start practical flashing and semaphore exercises in the first term and read one or two exercises a week throughout their training. Passing out speeds are 8 w.p.m. and 12 w.p.m., and the required eighty-five per cent pass mark is achieved by most.

Cadets have their first real introduction to the sea and ships when they embark in the frigates of the Dartmouth Training Squadron for their fourth term cruise. They perform the more simple tasks on board, and perhaps see enough of the ship to provide a grounding on which to start learning the professional subjects. These they start in earnest back at the college in their fifth term as midshipmen.

The aim of the Executive Officer's communications syllabus is, to quote the book, "to impart sufficient knowledge of simple fleetwork and signal publications to enable them to understand the service of

communications in naval operations . . . to act as O.O.W. without having to rely solely on communication ratings . . . and to act as signal officer of a small private ship". We have only a total of sixty hours in their fifth, sixth and eighth terms to put it across. Compare this with ninety hours on the old sub's course at *Mercury*, after many valuable hours with the chief yeoman when at sea as a midshipman, and one realises that the acting sub-lieutenant going to sea now from Dartmouth has not been trained to the same standard in communications, and other subjects also, as his former counterpart. However, it must be remembered that an acting sub-lieutenant's first eighteen months at sea constitute the final phase of his training, and he cannot be compared with the old style sub-lieutenant until the end of this period.

The greater part of the communications syllabus—eighteen 50 minute periods in fact—is concentrated on fleetwork, trying to cover chapters 1 to 8 in the A.N.M.I. Manoeuvres in six picket boats at sea is an ideal way of bringing home the practical application of fleetwork which the midshipmen find difficult to understand in the classroom. The standard remark after their first P.B. manoeuvres is "Gosh! It works". The picket boats are each manned by an officer—as the Captain—and four midshipmen to take the parts of O.O.W., helmsman, yeoman, and voice operator. 615 sets are used for communications. In half a forenoon we can get comfortably through all the manoeuvres and formations in the syllabus. In the picket boats the midshipmen also learn the elements of ship handling during manoeuvres, and the procedure on the bridge for reporting and executing signals.

The other main communication subjects which are

covered are voice operating, world wide radio organisation, tactical communications, enemy contact reporting, signal drafting, cryptography and E.W. There is time only to present the facts, list the books of reference, and hope that a fair proportion is understood. We are continually battling against the clock in an attempt to teach the most basic communication knowledge required of an acting sub-lieutenant at sea. After fleetwork we lay most importance on voice operating and hope that our teaching here, coupled with further practice in the Dartmouth Training Squadron, will make them capable operators on co-ordination and air control nets in their first ships. In the voice teacher, which we prefer to call the tactical teacher, the cubicles have just been equipped with thin steel revolving manoeuvring boards and magnetic ships, and we aim to combine practical voice exercises with manoeuvring board exercises.

The Engineer and Supply Officers are trained "to understand the part played by communications in the control of naval operations". Their syllabus is less than half the length of the executive officers' and they therefore run through everything more sketchily and are expected to remember little detail without the aid of books. They do spend as long on voice operating, signal drafting and enemy contact reporting as the executive officers, so that they may be of use in the operations room.

So much for the present. The new system starts in September and will overlap the present one for two years. The entry will be an annual one. About 180 cadets are expected in September of this year, and over 200 in 1961, including those from the Commonwealth. In their first year they will receive basic naval training only; at the college for two terms, and in the Dartmouth Training Squadron for one term. They will come to us for fourteen periods of communications in their second or third term to learn the fundamentals of fleetwork, some voice operating and, very briefly, radio organisation, before joining the fleet as midshipmen for a year.

In the third and fourth years of training as acting sub-lieutenants they will be given a year's academic course at Dartmouth and then, for the executive officers, a year of professional courses. This is more or less the re-introduction of Sub's courses, with the following advantages over the present system of professional training. Firstly, the sub-lieutenants will have been to sea for a year as midshipmen where they will have acquired sufficient background knowledge of ships and naval operations to enable them to understand the application of their professional training. Secondly, they will be on block instruction, where one has far more play with the syllabus, and less time is wasted transferring students thoughts from other subjects—gunnery, T.A.S., parade training, maybe—to communications during the first five minutes of every period. Thirdly, the communications course will be five weeks long, which is twice the time devoted to midshipmen at

present. The course will be at Dartmouth except for a three day visit to *Mercury* to see "the seat of learning" and to show them equipment which we are not able to instal here.

Since the introduction of the sixteen year old entry to Dartmouth in 1948 many changes have taken place. It is everyone's wish that the new scheme will be here to stay and become as established as the thirteen year old scheme was for so many years.

We were very pleased to see Commander Berthon here for a day this month, and to welcome Commander Seely and his crew in *Meon Maid II* to the Whitsun Yacht Rally. We hope other members of the branch will come down. You are more than welcome and accommodation is no problem.

H.M.S. ADAMANT AND THE THIRD SUBMARINE SQUADRON

Writing the last instalment was a cinch. Indeed, I would class it as history in the making. First the Vikings then Columbus and finally *Adamant* with the Third Submarine Squadron discovered America. However, that was too much of a gift for any author, and as our story re-opens we find *Adamant* back to normal, propping up the jetty at Faslane. This means that we must revert to the "daily round, the common task" for our news, and continuing in the same "Ancient and Modern" vein I would like to squash the rumour that Third Sub. Squad. Generals are addressed: FM S/M 3 To those in peril on the sea.

Juke Box Juniors

As I write in the plywood panelled wireless office it is sometimes difficult to see the wood for the Juniors, and in fact *Adamant* becomes more like a clearing station for *Ganges* every day. The arrival in January of C.R.S. O'Connell straight from an Instructor's billet at Shotley certainly dotted the i's and crossed the t's in that respect.

It takes a little while for them to get used to Navy ways. One Junior thought the ABCD officer was a "Schooley" whilst another, detailed for painting the deck of a T.R. was warned not to paint over fag-ends or dust—he didn't paint over them—he painted very neatly and carefully ROUND THEM!

Christmas Carol

Most people are familiar with the B.B.C., not so many have encountered the A.B.C. or to give it its full title, "THE ADAMANT BROADCASTING CORPORATION". It came into being on Christmas day when we broadcast our Carol Service to the island of St. Kilda, with resounding success. We used a 57DMR transmitter which older members of the Branch will remember as being extremely useful for hiding bottles of "screech".

Time and a Half

It baffles me how a man can be a highly trained Radio Operator in the Royal Navy and an

"Amateur" Radio enthusiast at one and the same time—there's a moral there somewhere! Nevertheless, not content with watchkeeping during the week and "Smashex" twice on Sundays, a bunch of these "Hams" led by L.R.O. Brian "Joe" Poole are endeavouring to get "GM30AE" onto the air. Undoubtedly this will be done in the not too distant future, despite the battered 89 they've rescued from a breaker's yard.

Other R.N. "Hams" will be glad to hear that they are buying more reliable gear in case the 89 blows up.

Up the Creek

A little further up our particular creek the unwary traveller stumbles upon Glasgow, home of Harry Lauder, Rangers and H.M.S. *Graham*, the R.N.R. Headquarters. As "host" ship for the Scottish circuit we are working towards a closer liaison between the ship's staff and the lads and lassies of *Graham*. We already co-operate with the weekly exercises with varying degrees of success, but our efforts are now being channelled in the social and sporting direction. We have had them onboard at the weekends, showing them around and introducing the Wrens to Pusser's cups and "after you with the spoon mate". We shall be playing them at soccer soon, the men of course, not the Wrens—I think, and we would like to take this opportunity of thanking C.R.S. Turner for his co-operation in the past and welcoming C.R.S. Morton who has managed to get ashore at last, as his relief.

Sludge-Marine Premiere

We can thoroughly recommend "Operation Petticoat" starring Cary Grant as a film showing submarine warfare as it should be fought as opposed to how it is.

The Premiere of this technicolour comedy took place in the cinema of *Ben Nevis*, the Odeon of Faslane, though perhaps odious would be a better word. Cary Grant was scheduled to attend this glittering occasion but unfortunately an ear infection prevented his arriving on time. However, he did pay us a visit a few weeks later and obviously still living his part of a submariner, he lost no time in installing himself at the Rum Tub. Mr. Grant rounded off his visit with a trip to sea in one of our submarines which only goes to show how well he must be insured.

What's Our Line

The contestant goes through the motions of laboriously writing out a long slop chit, swings an imaginary paintbrush round his head three times and then disappears up a jury aerial. The panel—though gagged—have no trouble in identifying him as a candidate for F.O.S.M.'s inspection.

The Inspection will be an historical fact by the time you read this, right now it's an hysterical fact. One thing comforts us. If F.O.S.M. decides to set fire to the ship as an evolution, we should cover

ourselves with glory as the following episode will show.

The T/P room was a little chilly and Lt. Copp, our S.C.O., arranged for them to have an electric fire. When this was done he rang up and told the M.S.O. that there was a fire in the T/P room. . . . The duty L.T.O. wasn't quite in the picture and when this message was passed on to him verbatim by the chap who'd answered the phone, he leaped into action with visions of an official citation, perhaps even an B.E.M.

He grabbed the nearest CO2 extinguisher and hurtled into the T/P room. A horrified operator gazed into the nozzle of the fire extinguisher and stammered that there weren't no fire there, perhaps next door in the Crypto Office. Our fearless visiting fireman went pounding in to confront an astonished A.C.O. who leaped up from his desk and backed away saying, "I'm not smoking". It was at this moment the "truth" in the shape of the T.O. who'd taken the phone call caught up with the one-man fire brigade before any real damage could be done. The citation was shot, the B.E.M. gone for a burton, but I understand that he is being offered honorary membership in the local Boy Scouts.

Shoot the Ref.

Like all the best newspapers and periodicals we round off this saga with sport, and for the athletically minded we can offer a wide variety. During the last two or three months the Communications Branch have really blossomed forth under the managership of R.O.2 Brady and we now have active football and hockey teams, both doing well in inter-departmental blood matches. There is also a badminton club and a bowling alley whilst the cautious approach of summer will undoubtedly bring canoeing and sailing to the fore again.



"C'mon Gladys, out pipes!"



R.N. UNIT, TANGMERE

This is the first contribution to THE COMMUNICATOR from the little known Royal Naval Unit of R.A.F. Tangmere. Our small band comprises the oddest types one can meet in three full commissions. Even *Mercury's* Chief G.I. looked a little doubtful when we lined up for Guard practice in preparation for the Air Office Commanding's visit last month. True to naval tradition we "showed the R.A.F. how to do things" and everything went extremely well on the day.

The luxuries we enjoy here are long weekends every weekend unless you are duty, which occurs about one in sixteen. There are no station cards to bother about and we sleep in single tiered beds. Spacious lawns dotted with small trees complete the picture of tranquility, which is unfortunately, shattered by the roar of aircraft, Canberras, Varsitys and an occasional Fleet Air Arm Venom. A good run ashore can be had in Littlehampton, Bognor Regis, Arundel, Chichester and surrounding towns, all of which are quite near.

On the debit side there is something new, called officially a "Domestic Evening" but known generally as "Bull Night". It takes place on Monday evenings after tea and leave is stopped until the Mess is looking spic and span. Rounds take place the following morning so one has to tread carefully until then.

The meals supplied by the R.A.F. are not quite up to *Mercury's* standard but the occasional salad is excellent. A large portion of the residents imagine that they enjoy perfect health, consequently, cricket, football in season and the energetic game of volleyball are played several days a week.

The work here is hard but interesting and everything is done to keep it that way by our able instructors. They are of interest in themselves: a

Most Reverend Arch Deacon of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, an ex-horse breeder, Cavalryman and Military Historian (he wins regularly on dogs as well as horses), and an ex-Senator of the exiled Polish Government. A more diverse mixture of talent in a Naval Training Establishment I cannot imagine.

The arrival of a new Regulating Chief, C.R.S. (S) Wilkinson, in place of C.R.S. (S) Clifford, caused a certain amount of apprehension among the "stanchions". We wish C.R.S. Clifford a most lucrative and very happy retirement.

The "Boss"—Lt. Cdr. Cheetham, who is due to leave soon, runs the section most efficiently. It is rumoured that, after his departure, his ghost will walk the colonnade waiting for the classes which go to "Stand Easy" too early.

If you are intelligent, imaginative, keen, efficient and well educated—volunteer for this course. (It's a year in U.K.) and when you arrive down here those fanciful ideas will soon be knocked out of you and you will be given some really solid work, both in and OUT of working hours!

Oh! by the way, if you want to know what we do here I should consult A.F.O. 2411/59.

THE FIFTH FRIGATE SQUADRON

The squadron, *Scarborough, Tenby, Torquay* and *Salisbury*, re-commissioned at the end of September '59 and went straightway to Portland to work up. This occupied most of October and November and certainly helped to blow a few cobwebs away. On completion of the work-up the squadron went north for a week's rock around Rockall in exercise "Sharp Squall IV", which gave us our first experience of working with allied ships and taught us that loud and clear is not always enough. One has to speak the

right language as well. After "Sharp Squall" all four ships returned to their home ports for essential repairs before starting the foreign leg of the commission, and a mid-winter silence settled over our activities.

Some repairs turned out to be more essential, and more prolonged, than others. *Torquay* was first away, for an Icelandic patrol, on the 3rd January. The others stirred slightly in their hibernation, but only to pull the blankets closer. *Salisbury* was next to get away, working in the Channel for a couple of weeks, before going to Londonderry, followed a week or two later by *Tenby*; *Scarborough* just stayed on dockyard and cruel rumour had it that her callsign was going to be changed to a three letter one.

At the end of January, with three-quarters of the squadron gathered in Londonderry, Captain (F) and the operational staff transferred to *Torquay* to take part in two weeks of Jass exercises. *Torquay* took it very well, but I am sure they had a sinking feeling every time the chief yeoman emerged from some dark and obscure corner of the ops room, clutching yet another sinister piece of paper (three copies, please!).

After Derry the ships returned to home ports again to give pre-overseas leave, while *Scarborough* shook herself free of the dockyard and somewhat gingerly took herself off to Portland to see if anyone remembered anything of what had been so strenuously practised three long months before. To everyone's relief there were no major mishaps. March dawned (or whatever a month does do) and the hour of our departure drew nigh. It had been planned to get all four ships together and make a departure in strength from Portsmouth, but unfortunately *Salisbury* had mechanical trouble at the last moment and couldn't make it. However, the three type 12's showed themselves off together at South Railway Jetty for a couple of days, and sailed on the calm sunny morning of 4th March—destination Singapore (with stops).

The first stop was Gibraltar, for two very rainy days, which didn't allow much activity, though the bars on Main Street got their fair share of attention. We then sailed for Malta in company with *Ark Royal*, exercising on passage, which was good value for all concerned. A 36 hour stop at Malta over a weekend allowed some old friendships to be renewed, and then we resumed our passage. The next port of call, not counting Port Said, was Aden, where we spent two days, and then Colombo. Here we were very well looked after by *Highflyer*. Soccer and hockey matches were organised, and the amenities offered were much appreciated, after a thirsty passage across the Indian Ocean. After two days at Colombo, course was set for Singapore, where the squadron arrived on 4th April.

At least the three anti-submarines arrived then. *Salisbury* got away from Devonport about a week astern, picked up her programme with *Albion* at Malta, and after a brief diversion to Gan arrived in Singapore on 20th April.

After a three week self maintenance period in Singapore, during which we got acquainted, or re-acquainted with Tiger beer, our oppo's in the Far East Fleet, Tiger beer, the delights of Kranji W/T, Tiger beer, and so on. We left Singapore with the Fleet on 23rd April for Manila where we were able to compare the merits of San Miguel beer, and meet some new and interesting sorts of rum.

The visit to Manila was a preliminary to exercise "Sealion", the major S.E.A.T.O. exercise of the year, which gave us experience of working with Americans, Australians, French and Pakistani ships. The exercise took place on passage back to Singapore, followed by a week-end of allied festivities, and a few days self maintenance before sailing for Korea and Japan.

En-route for Manila, at a sports day on the flight deck of H.M.A.S. *Melbourne*, against all-comers, including the carrier and a cruiser, *Torquay* won the day.

The visit to Yokohama by *Scarborough* was appreciated by all. For those who enjoy that sort of thing, bus trips were arranged to the country and around Tokyo, the latter terminating at the Kokusai Theatre manned entirely by 300 (imi) 300 girls. Definitely recommended. Others got themselves very clean indeed. As the remainder of the squadron is scattered far and wide around Japan, their activities remain secret, which is probably just as well.

Time and again, we have attempted to gather a squadron soccer team, but due to weather and distance apart (being much greater than standard) it has so far proven unsuccessful. We did have one run out at *Highflyer*, where the climate as much as anything beat us. However, sport generally within the squadron Communicators flourishes in every field. In fact, rumour has it that R.S. Bailey of *Torquay* is being re-categorised as a P.T.I. The Far East is a very good run that one or two people in *Mercury* and Malta might like to try (at sea of course).

R.N.A.S. BRAWDY

by D.J.S.

It has been some time since "Dai the Sparker" and "Yanto the Bunting" last contributed to our Magazine, and it's largely as a result of incessant brow-beating by the S.C.O. that yours truly now employs his literary talents.

1960 has seen an almost complete change of staff of some 22 Communicators (of whom the majority belong to our older and more senior side of the house)—even the S.C.O. is an ex-C.C.Y.

So far we've had a fairly easy time this year with only our own training squadron of aircraft to look after, but things look like hotting up between now and summer leave. Without going into details and having the "Official Secrets Act" wrapped round my head, we've been promised a very generous amount of night flying in the next few weeks, not to

mention 300 Squadron of the Indian Navy who commission here in July. Firmly believing in the saying "Where there's muck there's money", most of the staff spend their off-watch moments in the potato fields of Pembrokeshire, and a very lucrative pastime it is. It's been at least three weeks since I heard the old proverbial "give us a rubber taff".

Another, though perhaps less arduous source of income, is working as film extras for a London film unit who are making "The Wreckers" at nearby St. Davids. Extras were required as either Redcoats or Smugglers. The highlight of the scenes was a hand-to-hand "battle of the beaches" between the Redcoats and Smugglers in which many personal feuds were settled. Apart from the mercenary rewards (two pounds an afternoon) those who volunteered their services found the work a good skylark and had an insight into the film-making industry. Up to the time of writing however, no "discoveries" have been made.

On the horizon our next biggest headache looms—the annual Air Day, falling this year on July 16th. Usually it is an event well patronised and thoroughly enjoyed by the civilian populace (and R.A.s), but in general involves plenty of hard work for all departments on the Station. For those of you who have never been to a Naval Air Day I can definitely recommend it—providing you only go as a visitor of course.

I expect we've had about as much space as our beloved Ed. will allow, so until the next time we take leave in good old Dai bach tradition—Da bo chwi tan y tro nesaf (try Welshkey Chief).

WHITEHALL W/T

by Sub Lieutenant J. Shackell

Although Whitehall W/T is a slightly old-fashioned sounding name we hope that we are moving with the times. We still tear tapes, and type endless miles of page copy, for as yet STRAD doesn't seem really ready to relieve us of our jobs. We hope, however, to see a fairly major change in the very near future. The result of this change leaves us with an additional name around the middle of the year; we will then emerge as the U.K. Primary Tape Relay Centre in the Commonwealth Naval Strategic Communication Network. Although we shall still be tearing tapes, we will be more streamlined and centralized and although DTN will remain with us in a modified form, it will be another milestone in the direction of full automation.

At present, if you are drafted here, you might fill a position in the Fixed Service Room, where all the Commonwealth Naval circuits terminate . . . or perhaps a job on the Commercial bench could be yours or maybe tearing your hair in the Message Handling Room might be your lot. If a T.O. you might find yourself in the T.P. Room admiring the boundless energy with which the Wrens manage to fill 60 minutes of every hour, and that goes for their

sisters in the Taping Pool too, whose busy fingers diminish mountains of paper before your very eyes. But for those who have yet to come, and for those remaining for the introduction of the new Tape Relay Centre, although the Radio Room will still be there, as will be Commercial bench, Message Handling Room, and Taping Pools, after July you might fill a spot (mainly standing) in the Centre looking at 36 console positions spewing out tapes, or pushing tapes into 72 auto heads, hoping as you see the tape disappear for good and all, that you put it into the right one. I understand Their Lordships have approved issue of a well known patent teething jelly, usually for babies' tender gums, to ease the pain in the early stages of this new development.

For those of you holding the Leading Rate and below, if you are looking for a job, or if Draftie has promised you one and you are not quite sure what you are in for, please let me advise. We can give you something like 6 to 9 months employment with a little of the extra pleasures of L and R.A. and London Allowance . . . probably a bachelor flat in the West End . . . some have been known to share rooms at Hackney Wick with only a tooth brush between them, but that's for the O.Ds. Well Cagliostro was from small beginnings. We have a splendid parking place outside the door for that gleaming motor-cycle your dear old mum wishes you wouldn't ride; there is, however, very little space for the Jags, and Bentleys of the Chief Petty Officers and Petty Officers as the civvies have got all those billets. But whatever else we have to please you or make you laugh, the watchkeeping will kill you. As we never hear the call of both watches, or see the watchkeepers turn to at 0900, we reckon it's O.K. The tear-stained faces when Draftie beckons his nautical finger are heartrending, however, for those of us who remain, the pleasure of making new friends is all ours.

For those who long to join us, ask yourself the following questions as you fill out that Preference . . . Do I know the procedure book back to front? Have I really kept up my typing standard? If you can answer ZUE then you'll make a hit with us, if you can't you'll find us indulgent instructors.

S.T.C. CHATHAM

As we draw near to the last days in the existence of the Chatham Signal School, and having completed a circular tour of the Medway Towns (viz., Chatham, Cookham Camp, Prince Arthur and finally back to Chatham) we now offer this last contribution to our Magazine from the present S.T.C.

For those lucky ones amongst us who may be serving in the far flung outposts of this modern world, we are being closed down, under the new scheme for the Barracks, at the end of August, 1960. The building is being taken over by the Dockyard at the end of September.

We are still maintaining classes for advancement and runs through for pre-commissioning until the

end of August, so the senior rates are kept quite busy and up to date.

The O.i/c (Lt. Nash), is off to Whitehall in October, and will be missed by us all. Apart from the H.X.P. bods, no other drafts have yet been received so we expect to be back in H.M.S. *Mercury* by the end of September (Please note: 10 seats required on the R.A's bus).

During the Term we held the last of the Chatham Navy Days, the usual type of display was given and with some gentle persuasion on the visitors we managed to clear some 150 telegrams.

Sporting achievements have not been at all noteworthy this year, but an event worth mentioning is that the hockey team were well and truly cleared by the Seaman's Division—hardly surprising when their team consisted of 10 Indian naval ratings.

However at the Pembroke Athletics meeting we did quite well. Although the smallest divisional entry, we finished fourth in the overall placings, and notable triumphs were achieved by L.T.O. Bristow 2nd in 880 yards, R.O.2. Fuller 2nd in 3 miles, L.T.O. Hanshaw 3rd in the high jump, and T.O.2. Harris 3rd in the shot.

We would like to mention for the benefit of the older Communicators and families of Chatham Division, that the Communicators' Memorial Tablet, 1914-18, at present situated in St. George's Church is being renovated and its future whereabouts is being decided.

Lt. Nash was called upon the other day to invigilate a Cookery Examination, and had to sample three different full course dinners, fortunately no bi-carb. was required and he is still with us!

Although we are about to lose our School we will still continue in the old spirit, irrespective of our locality. Let us not forget—it was from the East that the Wise Men came!

H.M.S. LION

by Sub Lieut. K. Schofield

By the time this hits print the ship will have been in commission one month, and the conditions under which this article was drafted, will have been completely changed. From a "red lead" ship, which was receiving the Newcastle shipbuilder's final touches and staffed by the S.C.O., A.S.C.O., C.R.S., R.S., C.Y. and two R.O.1s, a fully commissioned and staffed grey coated cruiser will have emerged. Two R.O.3s did arrive last April but as yard noise interfered with MKX reception from Pitreavie, we whisked them off to the M.H.Q. where no doubt their desires were satisfied.

We are having several old *Lion's* to our commissioning ceremony, led by Lord Mountbatten, who was a midshipman in her at the Battle of Jutland. Another Communicator of note is Cdr. (Sp) A. S. Tempest, D.S.M., who was an ordinary signalman in *Lion* and was awarded the D.S.M. after Jutland. He is thought to have been the youngest recipient of this decoration in the First World War.

MALTA TO OXFORD IN 23 DAYS

by Ldg. Wren Penny Hamilton

Part 1

On 9th November, 1959, Ldg. Wren Maureen Rossiter and I left Malta on the first stage of our 2,000 mile trip to England. We flew to Naples, there to await the arrival of my Lambretta scooter, which was very kindly being brought over in *Birmingham*, due to arrive at Naples on 11th.

Our flight was very comfortable and we arrived at 1330 to a sunny Naples. We stayed with an Italian couple, who were cousins of a girl who had spent a holiday with us. They gave us a warm welcome, but being unable to speak either English or French—our only languages—everything had to be done by sign language.

We spent our spare day wandering around and discovered that Italian men were extremely friendly. At first it was amusing, but later it became rather tiresome. One pair treated us to a Pizza—a traditional Neapolitan dish—and then took us up to the Capodimonte Museum, a lovely place containing pictures and the exquisite china that takes its name from that district. Later we were trailed by another couple in a most expert manner and, having stopped us, they said they only wanted to speak English. We found ourselves eating another Pizza and doing our best to speak English.

Soon after *Birmingham* secured alongside, we went along to collect the scooter as we were anxious to be on our way as soon as possible. It took a little longer than we had hoped, but we were able to thank the Commander personally for bringing the Lambretta from Malta. Then collecting our tourist's petrol coupons we went back to our friend's house to get into our scootering rig and have a farewell meal.



Foul Weather Routine.

At 1400 the scooter was loaded and we set off feeling very excited that we had really started. Having been in the Girl Guides I should have known how to secure the luggage but nevertheless, it fell off on the outskirts of Naples. We retied our luggage and then, getting lost, we went five miles out of our way before dropping in at the NATO Headquarters, where we got a burly American Air Force policeman to tie our luggage on really securely. He asked us what the GBY plate on the scooter stood for and we told him it was Malta. To our surprise he asked where that was and though we explained he seemed none the wiser.

After that interlude we set off again on a wonderfully straight road where we could keep up a good speed. Our pleasure was short lived as after a bit down came the rain. A real deluge. When that stopped we made a coffee halt in order to dry our saturated feet and put on dry socks. While we were there with steaming cups of coffee from one of our thermoses, a carload of males stopped and got out to have a closer look. They obviously found the sight a little hard to believe until they saw the Union Jack on its little staff by the front wheel. They walked round us talking non stop in Italian and then to our surprise each one in turn shook hands with us and then off they went.

After we got going again down came the rain once more, so dripping wet we stopped at Terracina and found the cheapest hotel recommended in my AA Touring Guide where we stayed for the night.

The next day was fine and it did not take long to reach the outskirts of Rome. We entered that great city down a very long hill at nearly 60 m.p.h., which was quite something for the scooter.

Fortunately we had friends in Rome, with whom we stayed for the three days we spent there. It had begun to drizzle again by the time we reached their flat, where we were given an enthusiastic welcome. It poured with rain during the afternoon so we spent the rest of the day planning our journey through Italy.

During the next two days we toured many of the well known sights, such as the Coliseum and the Victor Emmanuel Memorial, but what impressed us most was St. Peter's in the Vatican City and the wonderful paintings in the Sistine Chapel. On two occasions we got ourselves lost but we found the Italian police were most helpful and on one occasion a police car guided us all the way back to the flat when we had missed our way after visiting the Trevi Fountain.

In a steady drizzle at 8.30 on 15th November we bade farewell to our hosts and began our longest day journey for the whole trip, which was a run of 214 miles to Pisa. The road was excellent and the scenery was lovely though motorised "Romeos" were a menace and we even had our photos taken from car windows. On this leg of our journey we had our first puncture, but it was well timed as we

were passing through Grossito, about half way to Pisa. Several garages were open, although it was a Sunday, so we stopped at one to mend the tyre. While this was being done, we were given the use of the manager's office to eat our lunch and we were also able to dry our socks and gloves in front of the electric fire. As the wheel was being put back a bolt sheared and the mechanic indicated that it could not be mended until the next day, but we could drive if we took it easy, so as we had a schedule to keep we decided to take a chance.

As we neared Pisa in the rain, the wind got so strong that we had to take down the windscreen after having nearly been blown into the kerb on a number of occasions.

We reached Pisa feeling a little battered and enquired the way to the youth hostel. When we reached the address we had been given, all we could see through the gate was gravel and a garden seat. We were full of dismay but decided to go in and see what we could find. Then we saw steps leading down into the depths of the earth and there was the hostel. It was clean but very dank. The other occupants were three Americans, who had come by car and two South African girls hitch-hiking to England.

The next morning we found a Lambretta agency where the bolt was repaired quickly and cheaply.

From Pisa we went to Florence. The road was dull and not very good. While having lunch on the roadside, an old woman and, we presumed, her pretty little grandchild stopped and invited us into their cottage to clean up. We gratefully accepted and later when I asked if I could take a photo of them both she rushed the child away to return very soon to the door with her grandchild minus apron and having had her hair combed. Grandma stood to one side but I insisted that she be photographed as well. She indicated that her appearance was not all she would like on such an occasion, but I finally talked her into it and the delight on her face was a treat to see as I took a photo of them both.

Florence was the only place where we found the Youth Hostel clearly signposted from the outskirts of the city. It was a splendid mansion set in a beautiful park with all the trees and hedges in wonderful autumn colouring. The house apparently had belonged to Mussolini and was where he had kept his mistresses. It was very grand but so very cold though the dunlopillow mattresses and pillows were a great luxury. There were many people there including Americans, Australians and Argentinians and two families camping out who we thought were mad until we noticed GB plates on their cars. British!

The next leg of our journey was the prettiest, I think, of the entire trip. To get to Bologna we had to cross the backbone of Italy. Being Autumn the colours of the countryside were incredibly beautiful and although we were in hilly country we were doing between 35 and 45 m.p.h. most of the way,

which was excellent after the somewhat sluggish performance my scooter was apt to give in Malta. For the enthusiasts, I was averaging between 85 and 100 miles per gallon, whereas in Malta I could never get more than 70 miles.

Our road took us through the Futa and Raticosa Passes and on the descent there were so many Z bends that I felt like a corkscrew at the end.

Dusk was falling when we entered Bologna, but we wandered around the attractive narrow streets looking at the town.

The next morning it was raining again but we decided to move on to Venice. This turned out to be the worst day we experienced on our whole journey as it rained the whole time, though this is not unusual for Italy in November.

Having passed through Ferrara we started looking for a barn in which to have lunch, but luck was not with us. Eventually we stopped by some half built houses, the upper storey being complete but the lower one being just a shell. When we indicated that we would like permission to eat there, first one member of the household appeared, then another and another until there were nine people by the door and they made us come in and take off our wet things. The house was spotless and occupied by three generations.

As we produced our meagre fare, the mother of the house wanted to put a clean white cloth on the table but we gesticulated that it was not necessary and produced our large piece of polythene. As we finished our meal two tiny little cups of coffee were presented to us on a tray spread with a dainty little cloth. Their wish to please was most touching and they were obviously most concerned because it was still pouring with rain when we had to go.

On we went. Maureen was soaked to the skin in spite of the Commando cape she was wearing but I was fortunate to have the protection of the windscreen. At long last, after having paid our toll, we got on to the Autostrada and sped along the good straight road on our final lap to Venice.

(To be concluded)

BIRD LIFE

FOLLOWING RECEIVED DURING "JET 60".
From JET HQ To Trinco General
Following received from Commander R. Cy. A.F.
Begins:—

While fishing this evening I rescued an aged parrot in a talkative mood. Parrot was floating on a piece of flotsam, in Malay Cove. The strength and fluency of the language of this bird leads the pure and simple Air Force to the assumption that it must have come from a naval vessel. Any ship claiming it, apply to me at Bambara House. Ends.



H.M.C.S. CORNWALLIS

In the last issue of THE COMMUNICATOR there was an article on signalling by steam. We should like to draw attention to the great importance attached to smoke signals and the photograph shows a class under instruction.

The technique, of course, is an old one, but asbestos blankets have replaced the previous type as they last longer. We expect a modern R.O. (Rug Operator) to reach at least eight puffs per minute and though this is simple on terra firma, it is a different matter holding a blanket down over the funnel in half a gale.

Life sure is tough over here.

Morse Flag has gone and Sound is "not done".
Flags all get torn, used up by the ton.
Flashing's still with us and D.S.L. too,
To help us to get that odd message through,
But when the amps fail and life is no joke,
Thank goodness we still can signal by smoke.



"Executive Signal, Sir"

We take off our hats to...



C.P.O. A. Lacey,
B.E.M.

Lieut. (SD) (C)
D. McD. Patchett,
M.B.E.

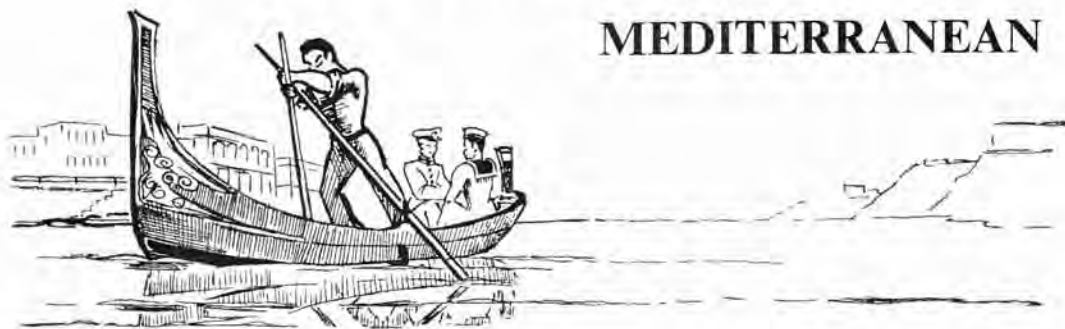
Lt.-Cdr. (SD) (C)
J. A. J. Johnson,
M.B.E.

FOR AWARDS IN THE BIRTHDAY HONOURS



Commander R. B. Knight receiving a copy of the Laws of Oleron from the Chaplain of the Fleet for presenting to the Island of Oleron.





MEDITERRANEAN

MALTA COMCEN

by R. S. Perrow

Once again it is time to put paper in the typewriter and "thump" out our contribution for the Summer COMMUNICATOR. Time certainly flies. It seems only like yesterday when the Easter entry was sent in.

The COMCEN had a fair crack of the whip in the April promotions. The then Lt. Walton and Sub. Lt. Wilson both taking a smart step further up the ladder. Not forgetting Sub. Lt. Enders, whom we occasionally see as Duty Signal Officer, from the Fleet E.W. Unit who also received his second stripe. Belated congratulations to all three.

The month of May certainly came in with a "bang", as far as our watchkeepers were concerned. What with "Regex" and "Medaswex 36" running simultaneously, a "Navcomexninemine" thrown in for good measure, the weather all against us with gale gregale and scend warnings galore, the watches were flat out for the first half of the month, and all credit must go to them for their near flawless handling of such a large amount of signal traffic. An interesting point came to light during this period. On the busiest day we handled 2,448 signals, remaining in 4 watches and with no additional hands, compared with 2,500 odd signals during the large NATO exercise, "Sidestep", last year when we broke into 3 watches and employed whatever extra hands we could get.

In the Easter edition I mentioned the forthcoming Med. Fleet Communication Ball, which was to be held at the Hotel Phoenicia on March 4th. It was certainly a night to remember, and our guests of honour C.-in-C. Mediterranean and Lady Bingley, F.O. Malta and Mrs. Hetherington and F.O.F. Med. and Mrs. Dryer seemed to be enjoying themselves as much as anyone. Lady Bingley kindly consented to present the raffle prizes during the evening, amongst the prizes were a picnic hamper for two and a Ronson table lighter. A "free" hair do at the Hotel Phoenicia was a major "spot" prize, for the ladies of course. All in all it was a huge success, with the greatest gathering of Communicators outside of *Mercury*, and a fine night for meeting old shipmates.

Finally a couple of amusing notes to end on.

The reply from Whitehall on FX15, to an enquiry from our operator—"AS TIC PSE YR OP NOT HERE I AM BUSTY"—Miss Mansfield no doubt! The following was the reply from Izmir on our querying a signal received via him from Ankara—"ARE HAVING TRBL GETTING ANY INFO FROM RXTGFC (Ankara) THEY DONT KNOW WHAT MSG WE ARE REFERRING TO. HARD TO FIGURE THEY ONLY SENT ONE YESTERDAY"—Snowed under??

So, with the cricket and water polo season getting under way, and our football and hockey teams resting on their laurels, we must leave you once again, with the hope that all our readers get well and truly "brown" for leave.

GIBRALTAR COMCEN

It has just been remarked that, since our last contribution to THE COMMUNICATOR, we have had almost a complete change of staff, which shows that this article is long overdue.

We still work in our temporary Comcen with a very limited complement, both of which factors tend to make NATO exercises a nightmarish experience. Bigger and better things are promised for the future, but in the meantime I wonder if we are the only Comcen which delivers its signals by the time-honoured method of "bag-on-end-of-string"? Let us say a good word for a much-maligned section of our community, namely the national servicemen. We badly miss our 4 T.O.3s for Windmill Hill, and our 4 R.O.3s for the Comcen, additional for training. They gave good service, both on duty and on the sports field, and the gap they have left in the organisation is very much felt. The refitting ships do their best to reinforce us, but as they are entitled to station leave while in the dockyard, their assistance is sometimes very limited.

Our Wren contingent, which outnumbers the men by 2 to 1 continues to flourish. Two more of them have recently married, whilst there are rumours of others not very distant. In this activity, at least, it has been proved that our girls are way ahead of those in other Services, but I think that this has always been recognised. All the P.O. Wrens are

owners of motor cars, and diligently ferry their male counterparts to and from the Comcen, while the more junior Wrens take their pleasures the hard way on scooters, complete with bonedomes. All of which should prove to civilian readers that good prospect lie ahead in the Wrens. *Join Now.*

In sports we have held our own too. Owing to our small numbers, we field teams combining the best of the Comcen Windmill Hill signal station and North Front W/T station. We won the soccer league and knock out cup, the hockey knock out and last year came second in the cricket league and won the knock out. The annual athletics honours also came our way. This should prove that hard work and long hours of watchkeeping turn out better and fitter men than the softer routines of the parent establishment. Our Wrens too, supplied two members of the Service team, in the Colonial small bore rifle shooting competition.

Social life on the Rock is not as limited as it is very often reported. There are many clubs and educational activities which the interested can join, ranging from rock climbing and bird-watching to motor maintenance and wood working. This does not mean that the Panama and Trocadero are not still well supported. It will be noted with regret by all old sailors that the famous (or infamous) Royal Bar and Winter Gardens have closed and that the Arizona is only a shadow of its former self.

Entry into Spain too, has recently been made easier by the Spanish Authorities. Passport holders used to be restricted to three visits per calendar quarter, but a few weeks ago this regulation was altered to allow a visit once daily. All Communicators visiting Gibraltar please note that if you have your civvies and your passport then all the attractions of Spain lie before you, bullfights, vino, tapas, etc.

Our sister establishment, Windmill Hill Signal Station deserves mention in this article. Combining the duties of Lloyds Signal Station and the R.N. counterpart, the C.C.Y. and his small band of six T.O.s do an important job. Windy at the moment is having a much needed face-lift, and is surrounded by scaffolding in an attempt to stop the leaks which make life in winter a little uncomfortable.

We are now looking ahead to the autumn exercises, when we expect to see some old faces and many new ones among the considerable number of reinforcements who will arrive. They will no doubt enjoy themselves this time, in between watches, as much as they have done on past occasions, and will return home, as do we all with happy memories of the volcanic pile which the Moors called "Jebel Tarik," the Romans "Mons Calpe" and we just "Gib".

H.M.S. FALCON R.N.A.S. HAL FAR, MALTA

It's been far too long since THE COMMUNICATOR got the word from the lizard hunters and scorpion

swatters of Hal Far, so your scribe—selected by popular vote—will stick to more recent history. We will assume that you have by now heard about the Malta convoys and all that, so we won't labour it.

The quiet time enjoyed by all during 1959 (*Centaur* early in the year, *Victorious* in November) gave the place a name for peace and quiet, "Sleepy Hollow", "Land of Nod", etc., which, we hope, 1960 has entirely rubbed out. Just to refresh memories, here are some of the jobs which Hal Far does for the Med. station.

FRU aircraft for AA firings for the Fleet. Drone Firefly and meteor aircraft for *Girdleness* Sea Slug firings. Houses and operates the Naval Observer School and 750 Squadron, recently shanghaied from Culdrose, these give all New Entry Naval Observers their primary training in the foggy art. Operates Pilotless Target Aircraft (rather like Doodlebugs) called "Buzzbees" for the more ambitious gunnery ships, who have only managed to shoot down one in 5 years. Keeps a "Flytel". Accommodates and garages carrier air squadrons disembarked during self maintenance periods, short refits, etc. Also offers a nearly permanent spare deck for carriers operating near Malta. Runs bombing ranges for the aforementioned aviators. Operates a permanent helicopter Search and Rescue Service.

We also tackle anything which baffles everybody else and which moves in three dimensions above 30 feet (stand fast the Barrakka).

All these pastimes need the usual perfect communications at both ends in each case. If these ever fail, an immediate creaking shambles ensues.

The arrival of a marauding Carrier in the Mediterranean has an electric effect on our existence. MSO traffic goes up by 150%, there are more voice circuits to provide and to man, Chiefie looks tense, and so on.

The biggest problem is to provide identical V.H.F. and U.H.F. facilities without running out of bodies and equipment (the crystal chandelier over my head is swinging in the breeze!). However, the Fleet Pool have turned up trumps so far and we also keep a greedy eye on Comms. staffs from refitting ships.

The interim U.H.F. conversation at Hal Far gave us just enough equipment to keep ahead of the snags.

The R.A.F. have very little U.H.F. out here, and the Army still appear to be using D.C., so we are often faced with the job of providing U.H.F. elsewhere in the Med. in order that *Ark's* air squadrons can use the bombing range in Libya, co-operate with the Army in Cyprus and so on.

This has been done by building an AN/ARC 52 aircraft U.H.F. equipment into a transportable cabinet and airlifting it to the right customer. We are also working on a man pack portable U.H.F.—the 698.

We are faced with the problems of providing communications between U.H.F. fighter aircraft carrying out air-to-air firings and the V.H.F. Meteors who towed the targets. The solution was a V.H.F./U.H.F.



auto relay which we christened PANDORA. For the technical types, it was an Aircraft V.H.F. 1936 equipment connected to an Aircraft U.H.F. AN/ARC 52 via an Airborne Relay 123. Power supplies were provided by an old Power Pack filched from an obsolete U.S. Radar set. The trials results were good, but the gadget is not reliable enough yet, and we are still tinkering.

Hal Far is a good draft to get if you don't mind irregular hours, possess two pairs of hands, two heads, no left feet, and are in practice with a fly swat. The amenities out here are quite something, the best swimming in Malta, sailing, all the team sports, two cinemas, two canteens and so on. We enjoy ourselves a lot.

The station is about six miles from the bells and smells of Grand Harbour and Valletta, although when the Carrier boys call on us it's hardly a quiet spot.

So if you're thinking of a place in the sun for your next draft, slap in and look us up sometime.

THE NAVAL OBSERVER SCHOOL

In the early hours of the morning of July 1st, 1959, the advance party consisting of Lt. (SD)(C) E. G. H. Reubens, C.R.S. (Jimmy) Edge and three Electrical ratings arrived in Malta. This party consisted of the spearhead for the transferring of the Naval Observer School from Culdrose to Malta.

After many headaches with stores, fitting of equipment and decryption of orders to Maltese labourers the School began to take shape and by the beginning of October was ready for the main party, which actually arrived on October 13th. Three days later saw the School fully operational (this also included 750 Squadron, which is our flying school). This squadron consists of Sea Prince aircraft which are

specially modified to enable students to carry out adequate radar, radio and navigational exercises. Our staff consists of one Communications Officer, who in addition to communication duties is the Staff Officer of the School dealing with all types of day to day problems. Also one C.R.S., until quite recently the only General Service Communication Rating, who controls the remainder of the Staff (three Radio Supervisors, reverted to General Service on the 1st August, 1960), arranges buzzer exercises and assists in the running of the Staff Office. So if any of you chaps get a draft chit out this way make sure your typing is up to scratch. Our ex air boys, the three R.S.'s, carry out a varied number of tasks which include completing Briefing Forms, E.W. Exercises when required by F.E.W.O., teaching Voice and Wireless procedures and a certain amount of Air Organisation. When the students are flying, the R.S.'s man the Ground Station to carry out assessments of their communication abilities in the air.

Our courses consist of six to nine officers made up from selected officers from the Fleet and the Supplementary List. Of the latter a number are ex-ratings and we are proud to be able to state that in recent courses ex-L Tel (Air) R.S. Lines, now Sub Lieut. Lines passed out top of his course, and on going to print we have two more ex-Telegraphists (Air) taking the course, Sub Lieut. Lafferty and Sub Lieut. McCarthy, to whom we wish the best of success.

Our New Observer School (we are in temporary accommodation at present) is well under way and should be completed by about April, 1961. However, any Communicator passing through Malta will always be certain of a welcome, and we assure everyone that an opportunity to have a look at our "set up" should not be missed, and we particularly welcome Communicators who aspire to fly.

H.M.S. BROADSWORD

We can only apologise for non-contribution to previous editions since last Christmas, and perhaps add our feeble excuse that we have been busy in the form of a running commentary on what it has been like being a Radar Picket Destroyer (prototype).

It is a fairly quiet number for the V.S. department as far as practical signalling goes, when actually out on Picket Station, but of course that is taken into account it seems since we have always been short staffed compared with Fleet Destroyers.

The Radio Department do not have things quite so good however, so much so, that during one N.A.T.O. exercise, the 'buntings' were trained as R.A.T.T. broadcast operators, and they made quite a good job of it too.

We commissioned on 30th September, 1958, and were to have sailed for the Mediterranean to join our Squadron (7th D.S.) in November—things didn't quite happen like that, what with radar teething troubles, the odd breakdown, etc. We were pushed from pillar to post (Chatham via Portsmouth to Devonport) not necessarily in that order, and finally sailed for Malta February 1959.

As expected, the first thing that greeted us was a Cyprus patrol where we led an uneventful life, though we acquitted ourselves fairly well in the sporting world against local Army opposition.

This was followed almost immediately by exercise "Dawn Breeze" which meant down to it at last. Everyone, it appears wanted to know what we could really do, and fortunately we were able to show them. We started off as part of the departure and close A/S screen, but owing to shortage of hands, the whole communications staff were grateful when we were sent 180 miles away to picket. This exercise brought our 'specials' a recommend from the C.T.E.

"Dawn Breeze" was closely followed by "Medflex", where once again we did much the same as before, except perhaps on a slightly smaller scale.

Both these exercises were most valuable to all the staff, as we had missed most of our proper work-up period before going to the Med. Our Squadron, at this time, was ready to return to U.K. which meant we would be doing a little short of three months for our Med. leg.—"All at sea, of course".

After a short leave (which quite rightly was all we deserved) we, like everyone else, had a "whippet job to do", where all was quiet and almost friendly.

Something, (the sea time I think) paid dividends at last because we next had two very good courtesy visits—Aarhus and Kiel—10 whole days at the latter, where, I might mention, we were treated right royally at the N.A.T.O. H.Q. Mess. They laid on a bachelor night (hereafter called an Opera) which meant that their poor wives gnashed their teeth, but stayed at home, and then on our last night of the stay, a very nice informal gathering, (I was very tempted to put this place down on my Preference

Drafting Card, but I know they'd only laugh at me trying to get a shore job).

This was followed by more visiting at U.K. ports, first Bridlington where we had 4,000 visitors in one day (ship not alongside, and in inclement weather) but they came, not to see our new toy, but Jolly Jack who, it appears, had behaved himself admirably ashore.

During our second Whippet Patrol a major fire occurred in the Radar Office, this led to a few thrills in fire fighting. As the accepted methods for fighting this fire proved inadequate, we finally had to use hoses. Much equipment was ruined in the process by both fire and water, and the consequence was two months in dockyard at Chatham thereby missing another scheduled exercise period. We did, however, catch up the final stages of the Londonderry exercises where the weather was very bad and spoiled the opportunity of good A/S action.

A flying visit to Gothenburg followed, and now back to our home port Chatham for paying off and recommissioning. We wish our successors a happy time, and in case they have any doubts about what they are in for, we can say *Broadsword* has had a short, but on the whole, happy commission. Accommodation on board is somewhat cramped, but everything is new and clean, which helps. Like everyone else, we have had our ups and downs, but on the whole, it has been interesting. I could perhaps best describe it by saying "I wouldn't mind if my next sea going draft were a radar picket, even if it is a little lonely 200 miles ahead of the Fleet".

H.M.S. TIGER

Sitting down to write this article, I've suddenly realised that it might be the last you'll get from this—the first—commission of the *Tigers*. We are due to settle down into a Guzzonian drydock about November and I really can't see Draftie leaving all these Communicators loafing around for the end of the refit about next March.

Of course, one never knows, but just in case, I thought you might like to hear more about life in a brand new ship as we know it, now that we've been a running concern for some 18 months. However, before that—I trust that you'll excuse the verbosity of this article—I ought to recap our adventures since we last wrote, when we were gnashing our teeth about something called "Marjex".

That's way back in the past now and this article is being written in the middle of "Royal Flush", an exercise most notable for the tiddley design of exercise order cover. One event does stick out in our mind. *Zest* got a racket bearing, was sent down to investigate and got herself torpedoed. There must be some truth in the thought that this wireless business is here to stay. Over the Easter period, we spent a long time self maintaining, in Bailey's Yard at Malta. We expected this time to be very



Just a boat load of Tigers.

uneventful but it turned out very much to the contrary. By the time all the staff had been sent off on range courses, firefighting, commando liaisoning, flying in Shackletons, and "portable W/T exercise training"—not to mention TO2 RO2 courses—we found it just left the S.C.O., A.S.C.O., C.C.Y. and C.R.S. to paint the U.T.R., replace all the aerials, scrape our rugby pitch of a flagdeck and keep the M.S.O. going. Fortunately the Admiral's staff retired to Manoel Island for this period which helped the signal traffic immensely.

One evening L.T.O. Fellar had the brilliant idea of repainting his half of the mess deck. This idea spread with such enthusiasm, especially when he decided to use strawberry pink, that our Comms. messdeck has now got pink, white and blue bulkheads. Very patriotic, even though one should get issued with dark glasses at the door.

It might be worth saying here, though, that our messdeck is without any doubt the best kept and most pleasant in the ship. It is lucky that we don't suffer too much from "gangway trouble" but nevertheless, it has been mostly enthusiasm and good control that have made it so pleasant.

The end of the refit came along far too quickly for all of us; the Chief Yeoman was still dashing around with his pot & two, some chaps were still away "on courses" (the official cover phrase for a few days loaf with our friends in the H.Q. Signal Bde. of HQ 3 Commando) and R.O.2 Norman was sweating out the dust in his flat.

This didn't prevent us from having a day at the beach and our thanks to N.A.S. Hal Far for their co-operation. The whole staff (xmt M.S.O. w/k's on watch) left the ship by whaler (S.C.O.) jeep (C.Y. Hales) and bus (the loafing A.S.C.O.). The whaler crowd putt putt round to the beach, manfully struggling with a leaking oil pipe, the jeep full of food and buntings (naturally) went straight to the beach and the bus bosuns went to Hal Far to gaze in awe at their wide open spaces and lack of hands. We came away suitably brain washed, but none the wiser on how a N.A.S. gets through so many signals with so few sparkers. The buntings reckon that's the only way to get through signals—few sparkers!

The rest of the day we spent loafing on the beach or being paddled round the bay in the S.C.O.'s boat. (Note for T section—A 622 receives music beautifully but ought to incorporate a loudspeaker).

From the beach to "Shop Window" with *Ark Royal* was a bit much but it happened in less than four days. This was a rehearsal for the proper programme which *Ark Royal* put on for the Spanish V.I.P.s at Barcelona. As it happened, we managed to take full advantage of it by bringing all our wives and girl friends on board for the day; they and we were thrilled by the acrobatic displays of *Ark's* aircraft.

And, having disembarked the ladies it was off to the bullfights in Barcelona via "Junex I". The latter was a passage exercise, most notable for a five hour "Casey" in which nobody saw nothing, everyone said nothing—and a quieter five hours it would be difficult to find.

Barcelona had the usual attractions—except that we seemed to be guard for everyone on everything. The force present was *Tiger*, *Ark Royal*, *Girdleness* and three R.F.A.s. A splendid team to support the British Trades Fair but Yeoman Cooper in the M.S.O. could have done with some of the free trades fair "glop" at the end of it.

Next stop Villefranche and somewhat quieter too, for the Fleet was well dispersed along the Cote d'Azur. We landed the usual shore W/T station, to be greeted with the key of the Club d'Yot and all the bottles in a neat row. Whilst all this was going on, one of our number, R.O. Brooker, was busy sailing M.F.V. 76 the length and breadth of the Med., S.O.P.s on Mikes, duty bunting and relief helmsman with a run ashore nearly every other day seemed to suit him.

It's a pity that this article has to be in so early for we've many more runs ahead of us—and no doubt—much work, but I guess those yarns will have to wait until some lonely sparker has nothing to do onboard in Guzz, come November. And this is where we came in—expecting this article to be our last. What have we discovered about this brand new ship with its ultra mod. con. facilities in that time? One thing is—someone must do something soon about the disposal of confidential waste. It cannot be burnt in these modern ships and so must be saved. After four days at sea, we now have to walk on top of seven enormous bags of gash. It really is a burning problem!

Has your ship met up with Communal Duties yet? We have, and it means, in this ship, giving away 2 T.O.s and 3 R.O.s permanently; as messmen, galley party, chippies tool bag bosun, etc., for the whole commission, out of a staff of about 40. Ours go for a 3 month stretch—some like it, others hate it. Some manage to forget all about communications during this time, others come up voluntarily to keep their hand in. It's difficult, but a necessary chore. Our 3 month period comes round twice (for it's only R.O.2s and below who go) which is

six months in two years not sparking or waving handflags. A sad business. Has anyone a solution?

We also found, during our commission, that the Comm. plan is usually well ahead of the equipment. In one respect it's not—we've got a gadget in the L.R.R. which, when plugged through to the flag-deck, will send the buntings an auto flashing exercise at whatever speed they wish. And apology to *Trafalgar* and Co. for its temperament in Palmas one Saturday morning. However, the essentials of a Flagship's RATT equipment should be a minimum of two auto heads and two reperforators, with an additional standard bay. By the time we get them, no doubt the planners will have us on eight RATT circuits instead of the usual four. While I think of it—we don't much care for R.S. Lucas's (*Victorious*) idea of ships reading the broadcast from the Flagship being able to key it. It's certainly a technical attraction but we feel in *Tiger*, that:

1. It's as quick to read by C.W. and retape or push out by hand on the FSK broadcast, and
2. Once someone else has got your broadcast, all sorts of strange things may happen to it.

Sorry *Vic.*—not for us.

If this is our last article I should say a word about the Flag Staff. It is, we understand, a shore job. Don't let anyone kid you if you're drafted to F.O.F.'s staff. I estimate it's a good nine months out of twelve afloat. Be that as it may, our Flag Staff have been very welcome and, I think have enjoyed their stay. We've certainly been very grateful for them, and all their help. Our own junior staff have gained much from being in the Flagship. It's worth mentioning that on the occasions when we've conducted night manoeuvres by Hether lamps, our operator was J.T.O. Judges. This despite a host of Yeoman and L.T.O.s available. We like these night manoeuvres, even though we suspect the Admiral has his fingers crossed.

This must be enough from *Tiger*. Too much has been said already, but, communications wise we feel bound to quote the words of our Iranian Sub Lieutenants, "We laike dese sheep".

TRAFALGAR AND THE 7th DESTROYER SQUADRON

I am slowly going mad cooped up in here with windy hammers on the ship's side bulkhead and a riveter apparently about two feet from my left ear. The few of us left in *Trafalgar* at the moment are sweltering at the bottom of a Bailey's dock tackling the paintwork with gay abandon; our communicating confined to hoisting and lowering the ensign daily.

The rest are scattered far and wide, on leave in England or locally, on course at Malta Signal Training Centre, and a lucky pair doing rugged duty in an M.F.V. last heard of at Taormina. Well, here we are doing a long refit slap in the middle of

an eighteen month commission; just about worked up and now busy working down only to start all over again in a couple of months' time. *Dunkirk* and *Jutland* are likewise engaged at Gibraltar, while the remaining two ships, *Broadsword* and *Scorpion* are alternately savouring the solitude of a Cyprus patrol and running about the Mediterranean from one delectable spot to another with a certain amount of picketing and plane-guarding thrown in. It's a crying shame that the Squadron should be so split up and so many people spending their foreign leg in the dockyard frittering away their time or having odd jobs and jollies created for them. I only hope that it won't happen again.

Our recent exploits consisted of a trip to Naples with *Dunkirk* where the Communicators were generally to be found taking photographs of Gracie Fields in Capri or exploring the artistic relics of Pompeii.

In "Medaswex 36," which included three ships of the squadron, *Trafalgar* was usually thrown in with some Turks who, now and again, found the linguistic strain too great and we inaugurated a new transmission instruction for the message format "Relay on this circuit in Turkish to. . ." Nevertheless, we were impressed by their intimate knowledge of even the more obscure signal books groups and we enjoyed their company.

R.F.A.s "TIDE AUSTRAL," "FORT DUQUESNE," "FORT ROSALIE"

By L.T.O.s F. Cox, P. O'Mara and A. Poole

Greetings from the "Wavy Navy" to all you R.A.s and "barrack stanchions". Very soon we will be seeing some of your smiling faces out here in the Med. Fleet Pool, as according to A.F.O.s the Pool is being cut to a minimum and now only L.T.O.s and L.R.O.s can expect this glorious draft. If you are one of the lucky ones we hope this article will enlighten you, we also hope it will not provoke desertion.

First of all, we have our mobile cigarette lighter, *Tide Austral*, with L.T.O. Fred Cox in the bunting's seat, he sends his regards to the S.S. Mess President saying, "Your turn next". *Austral* is by far the most modern and fastest of the trio and it has been reported that she has been seen doing such fantastic speeds as 14 knots. She is always in big demand with the Fleet and we think every matelot in the Med. has an extra large cigarette lighter that burns avgas faster than the carriers.

The "big eats" are supplied by *Fort Duquesne*, she always seems to be meeting *Ark Royal* and giving her stores. It was noticed during one R.A.S. the *Ark* was being supplied with "National Dried Milk", so we wish to state here and now that requests for baby powders and rusks cannot be

entertained. The *Duquesne's* V/S is looked after by L.T.O. Ginge O'Mara, who, on a snowy R.A. day in January, waved a sad goodbye to *Mercury* pig farm and set course for Malta via the "Rising Sun".

Last but not least, we have "Guy Fawkes" Flagship, *Fort Rosalie* here we have our two "Orientals" T.O.I Hoo Flung Claxton, and L.R.O. Hari Kari Poole, they don't seem to be getting any fatter despite the Chinese dishes on *Rosalie*, she never seems to leave Bighi Bay so we can only guess there is not a great demand for Chinese crackers in the Fleet nowadays.

We have had our share of the exercises, including "Marjex" and "Medaswex 36", the latter was a N.A.T.O. one and we offer our apologies to the Italian ship *San Georgio* who was C.T.G. as he had to pass his signals on convoy common two or three times before we finally "got the message". We regret we did not have our Italian-English dictionaries handy at the time. The only thing that was mentioned at the washup was that *Fort Rosalie* had not gone to shelter stations but it was regretted that the only signals understood by her sixty Chinese crew were "Fire Stations" and "Abandon Ship".

The "terrible trio" sail for "Spainex" (this is not a bullfighting exercise) on 30th May and this will

take us to the sunny shores of Barcelona, Gibraltar, Ville Franche, and Golfe Juan. In July we were due to spread the buzz in Rhodes, Navarin, and Athens, so read all about these foreign climes in our next epistle, and don't forget, if you can do without your tot, put up with too much steak, stay watch on stop on and can get used to wearing civvies all the time, this is the job for you, don't delay, slap in today. . . .

SUMMER COMPETITIONS— PRIZE WINNERS

Winning Feature R.O.2 M. A. Nugent—
"Slangkop W/T"—see page 67.

Photograph—B. W. Hadley—see page 81.

Cartoon—R.S. T. Mawson—see page 87.

Acknowledgements:

Photographs—Page 66—E. D. Alexander,
Godalming. Page 89—C.R.S. Stray, Page 91
—R.E.M. Kenley.

Cartoons—Page 51—C.P.O. G. Foster, Page
57—R.S. T. Maloson. Page 65—J. Eaton.



KNOCKER by Jack Eaton



EXPED IN NORWAY

by J. R. O. Pottinger, H.M.S. Malcolm

Monday, 29th February—1 Officer, 2 P.O.s and 8 Ratings (including myself) arrived at Sydspissen, a rest camp for Norwegian soldiers. Here we would make our base for five days, except for Wednesday night when we would camp out.

The forenoon was spent in sorting out our skis, adjusting them to fit and, in general, settling in to our new quarters. For the afternoon of this first day, we were novices and as such we would get used to our skis. It is essential to learn the basic principles. We were able to do this from S/Lt. Tennant, who had lived in Switzerland for three years. We were to live on skis for five days. Of course we had no idea, and returned to base for tea, looking like Abominable Snowmen.

The first evening was spent in Tromsø helping to celebrate the opening of the new bridge. A few fireworks, and then we were too cold—we lost no time in finding a nice warm cafe with a "Jukebox".

What a peculiar habit, all the lights in the town go out at 0030 as they turn off the "genny"—we were in heaps all over the place, we never anticipated anything so cruel.

This Rest Camp food took some getting used to, we ate the same thing for breakfast, dinner and tea—cheese (goats and white) salami, tinned fish, and lots of milk. Supper was a cooked meal.

Tuesday we set out on our first trek across the thick snow-covered slopes of Tromsø, covering three miles before we stopped for lunch—sandwiches! We spent the afternoon learning to turn—which is a feat on its own—and stopping (also a big problem!) but it was to save us many dives into the snow later. Even so, we still left holes to prove we just couldn't

use this orthodox method of stopping every time. We slept well, of course, that night.

Transport took us to our camping site on Wednesday afternoon and as it gets very cold when the sun goes down, it is necessary to pitch camp immediately. You dig into the snow for warmth, our tents proved very warm indeed. Also by digging and pitching one's tent in what is virtually a hole big enough for a two-man tent, you are protected from any wind. Everybody had a good night's sleep, except me, I found that a patch of rock didn't make a very pleasant pillow!

After a breakfast of bacon and eggs, we started off on a hike to Tromsø (on skis of course); we were quite proficient by now and each party had four landmarks to find, and we were to note the characteristics of these landmarks.

The first objective was "Skatora Light". On reaching it we found that it had been moved to the mainland three years previously. Then on to find a "flag pole", as we had to find the days that they flew a Norwegian Flag; alas, that too was deserted! On now to the "ski-jump", how many grandstands? There was one but even this turned out to be a "Judge's Dais". Finally a block of flats. The number of windows on the SW side? 53.

A long day, thoroughly enjoyed by all, including the T.A.S.I. who couldn't fathom out the reason for his skis wanting to take him backwards.

Oh joy! the rest camp! We had covered 13 kilometers or 8½ miles in seven hours.

Friday came too soon. We had to return to the ship which, incidentally, had been on Fishery Protection patrols, whilst we had been enjoying the warm hospitality of by now many Norwegian friends. It is not possible to over estimate the fun one has ski-ing, it was and is really exhilarating.



EXPED IN MERCURY

PRIZE WINNING FEATURE

SLANGKOP W/T

by R.O.2 M. A. Nugent

If you are drafted to Slangkop W/T, you leave U.K. (after having had fourteen days F.S.D.L.), feeling very pleased with yourself at being drafted to one of the most popular stations in the world.

If you are married, you take your wife and kids (if any) to Southampton and stroll up the gangway of one of the Union Castle liners, with a steward carrying your luggage for you. Three days later you arrive at Las Palmas or Madeira for a quick run ashore. With duty free beer, spirits, and cigarettes, not to mention eight course dinners with excellent food and table service, the remainder of the voyage can be left to your imagination. All too soon the ship is entering Cape Town Harbour where you are whisked through the customs, down the gangway and into a pusser's tilley.

Driving through Adderley Street (the Piccadilly of Capetown) you are filled with admiration for the picturesque view of the Table Mountain, which appears to dominate the whole city. This must be one of the most impressive views in the world.

Leaving Cape Town behind, you drive down the peninsula amidst more colourful mountain scenery, until you arrive at *Afrikander*, where the Flag of C-in-C. S.A.S.A. is flying. On completion of joining routine and other formalities, the tilley is again on the road heading for Fish Hoek. Fish Hoek is a seaside resort on the eastern side of the peninsula and houses the majority of Slangkop R.A.s. The tilley returns to *Afrikander*, and another form of transport is presented for the first stage of the journey—a "luxurious pusser's bus"—with a chauffeur.

Boarding the bus, you find yourself amongst a number of weary-eyed watchkeepers, all as happy as the day they were born, due to that fact that they were about to start a 48 on. The bus rattles out of Fish Hoek bound for Slangkop. The signpost in Fish Hoek indicates that the Wireless Station is seven miles away. Moving towards the outskirts of Fish Hoek the houses get scarce and in no time at all the bus is lurching like a minesweeper to the many undulations of the only road to the camp, with thick bush on either side.

With the last fourteen days fresh in your mind, your spirits tend to be slightly dampened with the first view of Slangkop. The clearing in the bush gives you a full view of all the aeriels, accommodation huts and the radio station itself.

Unfortunately this view is not particularly impressive, and the more that's seen of it, the less impressive it tends to become.

You very soon find yourself watchkeeping and back down to earth, at the beginning of an eighteen month or two and a half year engagement, as the case may be.

It does not take long to meet the rest of the staff, which amounts to approximately thirty-five R.N. and a half a dozen or so S.A.N. Although there are only a few to choose from, a soccer team and cricket team is fielded every season. As the seasons are reversed at this end of the globe, our cricket season will soon be drawing to a close and we now look forward to a successful soccer season. Our cricket team is third in the league at present, but it is expected that we shall finish in one of the first two positions.

Another form of sporting entertainment which has been introduced recently is the periodical indoor sports socials between the two transmitter stations and ourselves. There are three awards. The main trophy is a baby's pot, and is presented to the best merited station for snooker, table tennis and darts. This trophy has been held by Slangkop since its introduction last year. The next trophy, which is thought by some to be paramount of the three, is the beer drinking trophy. This is a handsome lavatory seat, decorated with various beer labels. Needless to say, Slangkop has also held this trophy since its introduction. The third, but by no means least, is the ladies' trophy. Here it is felt that the R.A.'s wives are not pulling their weight, as we have never won the rolling pin which is presented for the most points gained by the ladies' Hoop La teams.

Besides the sport and fun, we also have our share of work. Exercise "Capex" kept our ship shore and broadcast operators busy, whilst the Christmas rush of telegrams kept one and all extremely busy. With only eight in a watch to do ten jobs, things are apt to become quite trying at times.

We have also had our tragic moments here at Slangkop, and I am sure the whole staff will join me in expressing deepest sympathy to the parents of the late R.O.2 Whiting who was killed in a car accident on the 2nd February, 1960.

So far this year we have only had to fight one bush fire, which was soon controlled with a few beaters and shovels. Even so, this proved most inconvenient (being in the middle of a 48 on), and added to everybody's discomfort.

Unfortunately there is no rum issue here, but we have some form of compensation, by being able to purchase South African liquor duty free. For instance, a tot of brandy is sixpence and a bottle is less than six shillings. Due to these cheap prices, a great deal of beer and spirit was consumed over Christmas and New Year. Whilst on the subject of Christmas, we would like to take this opportunity of thanking the numerous ships and stations who sent us cards.

It is with regret that we pay our last tribute to one of our three mascots—Bonzo. Bonzo, a far

from handsome mongrel, had lived on the camp for fifteen years, but alas, fate struck in the form of an M.G. sports car. The other two mascots, Sandy (another dog), and a nameless black and white cat, are still faring well.

Our congratulations are offered to "Charlie" Haestier on his recent promotion to C.P.O. Tel. S.A.N., and to R.S. Strong who was rated C.R.S. the day before he sailed for U.K.

Captain R. C. P. Wainwright, D.S.O., R.N., as Commanding Officer H.M.S. *Afrikander* and Chief of Staff to C-in-C. S.A.S.A., did rounds at the Station a short time ago. This, being the last major function to have taken place at the time of writing, brings Slangkop up to date, after having had no entry in the last two COMMUNICATORS.

It is hoped that this article will have given all readers an idea of what is going on at ZSJ, the station that always seems so remote, and hope that I have not disappointed nor disillusioned anyone who may be awaiting draft to Slangkop. But for those who really want to know what goes on here, remember to put down for this draft on your next preference drafting form, and hope for the best.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL SIGNALLING

R.O.I. Saunders

H.M.S. *Mothbawl* was the pride of the Med. Fleet. Built 60 years before of a solid, all-wood structure, she was still as good as new—or as good as could be expected after 45 years in reserve. People said that in a race for longest time in harbour, she would come fifth, after the *Fourth*, but the day dawned when the "Kon Tiki" as she was affectionately known, went to sea.

This shook the Chief Stoker very badly especially as the buzz hadn't even started in the engine room. So much so, that he took to his bed and earnestly read his "I SPY of steam engines" just in case.

The sparkler stated that if he didn't get a new crystal set *Mothbawl* would be going to sea without radio, and this—as every sparkler knows—is worse than going without your tot.

Navi kept muttering that if they thought he was going to leave his "little cabbage" ashore just to go to sea, they had another think coming. His last tender farewell was something to see.

At a speed of two knots and entirely under her own steam, H.M.S. *Mothbawl* left Malta, bound in slow motion, for England.

With no land in visual range the sparkler took over the communications. He stayed in good touch for another mile, then dropped his herring in tomato sandwich into the set. This, as he stated, blocked reception, and it wasn't worth transmitting if he couldn't receive so he went and got his head down.

A few days later Navi was walking around in a daze on the bridge.

"What are you thinking about, Pilot?" said the Captain.

"My little coffee-coloured girl, sir", said Navi.

"Coffee-coloured?"

"Yes sir. I'm rather fond of coffee!"

"It's rather lucky", said the Captain, "that you're not too keen on Creme de Menthe. Goodness knows where we'd find that colour".

"We could try the Comms. Mess", said the Middy.

"They keep saying they're a shower of green . . ."

"Thank you Midshipman", interrupted the Captain. He looked at the chart and pointed to a red blob. "Pilot, what land is that?"

"That's a heart sir", stammered Navi blushing.

"Ahuat", said the Captain. "Never heard of it. Still keep your eyes open. We'll try and get a fix on it".

Suddenly Middy, who had been surveying the beaches, dropped his binoculars and pointed. "A tall landmark ahead, sir", he shouted. "I do believe we've made it".

"Must be England", said Navi, though his mind was still in Malta, "Probably Big Ben".

"Oh", said the Captain, "So it's Big Ben is it. And how long has Big Ben been holding an ice-cream?"

Middy looked up and Navi, visions of "The Caine Mutiny" embedded on his mind, looked round for something heavy. He was rather pleased when the Yeoman came running up onto the bridge.

"Message from that ship, sir", said the Yeoman looking puzzled, "Quote 'Got any gum, chum. Have a Lucky.' Unquote".

"Thank you Yeoman", said the Captain, "And Pilot, I hate to disillusion you but that Big Ben happens to be the Statue of Liberty. 500 years earlier and you'd have discovered America!"

Which just goes to prove the importance of V/S which is what I set out to do anyway. What do you mean, you don't see it? Look, there's this ship see, H.M.S. *Mothbawl*, and she's in the Med., see, and . . .

OUR JENNY . . .



"But sir, Stirling Moss says you should accelerate round corners!"