

617



# THE COMMUNICATOR



VOL 21 - No 6 WINTER-SPRING 1973

## A Message from the Captain of the Signal School

Having now been in command of the Signal School for a year, and having had time to assess the position of the Communications Branch, taking into account all the changes that have been made since I was last involved, and all the changes under consideration, I would like to claim a small space in THE COMMUNICATOR to pass on a short message to active Service readers. I would like to say much more, but when policy matters are being looked at in the Ministry of Defence it is unwise for anyone to make written forecasts as to their outcome.

### The Operations Branch

Firstly, a word about the Operations Branch. The Naval General Message which gave news of the Admiralty Board decision to form an Operations Branch from the existing Communications and Seaman Branches did not include much detail because the details which interest you have not yet been finalised. You will have to wait for another 3 or 4 months (I hope no more) before everything has been sorted out in the Ministry of Defence, but I firmly believe the great majority of you — if not all — will be reassured when the time comes. It is absolutely right that our Branch should form an important part of the new Operations Branch because Communications and Electronic Warfare are vital to the efficient fighting of a Ship at sea — and this is what the Operations Branch is all about. I think you will find that the General and Tactical Branches will continue in their most important roles and that your future careers and jobs will be largely unchanged. On the Electronic Warfare side there is obviously a strong case for a move towards the Seaman side of the house but if this is decided upon I shall be very disappointed if you do not find the arrangements for implementing such a move perfectly satisfactory; and that, in particular, your interests as a Communicator, should you wish to remain one, are absolutely safeguarded. (But do not get the idea that this will stop the employment of Ws 'part of ship' which already applies in some ships!)

### CODAP Questionnaires

Secondly, I would like to thank all those who took so much time and trouble in completing the CODAP Questionnaires. I am aware that some of you expressed scepticism as to the weight that would be attached to your statements; but I have myself seen a number of your comments and an officer is even now going through every one of them. The information gained from the analysis

and the views you have given is all most useful and thanks to your efforts it was a thoroughly worthwhile exercise. In particular, the results are being used in work to improve career courses.

### Accuracy in Signal Messages

Next, I want to mention the subject of accuracy in signals. I have heard many comments to the effect that the Communicator is rapidly losing his manual skills and therefore his job satisfaction. Job Satisfaction is of course a personal thing; and whatever the degree of satisfaction currently achieved I cannot help feeling that it would be much higher if only we could achieve a higher standard of accuracy in message processing.

In the modern communications world automation is playing an increasingly important part and unless our Signals are processed really ACCURATELY they will be thrown out by the computer, and time, energy and money will be wasted; and efficiency will suffer. Therefore make sure that you are really on top of your job and — despite the pressures under which you frequently have to work — aim for greater ACCURACY and thus greater efficiency. When you have achieved this, and the COMSTAR Awards start flowing in (who knows? — we might even win the NATO Competition!) I think you will find yourselves much more satisfied and proud of your proficiency.

Obviously there are many other problems we are worried about and I know that the demands made of the Communicator today — particularly at sea, but not forgetting the shore watch-keepers, too — are as great if not greater than ever before. But I, too, am human and have no magic wand; all that I can say is that I and my (decreasing) team in HMS Mercury, together with others in responsible positions, are working at it.

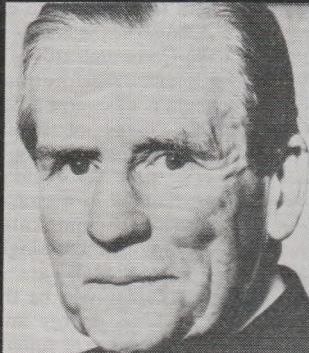
### The Editor, The Communicator

Finally, a word on behalf of you all to our hard-working and most successful Editor, John Ellis. As you will have seen in his Editorial, this will be his last edition and I would like to thank him most sincerely for the great efforts he has made, ably assisted by a small band of helpers. The job is unpaid and not always rewarding — but it is most important. I hope you will all give his successor, Peter Clark, the same support and help in keeping THE COMMUNICATOR going.

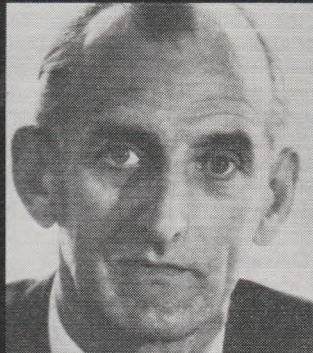
A Very Happy Christmas to all readers and a successful and, I hope, prosperous New Year.

*Reforge*

# A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM TWO SOLDIERS



Field Marshal, The Lord  
Harding of Petherton



Major-General, The Viscount  
Monckton of Brenchley

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# THE COMMUNICATOR

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and the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society*

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## EDITORIAL

### It's Time to Say Goodbye

As this is the last edition of THE COMMUNICATOR I shall edit I would like to take this opportunity to write a few words about our magazine. I'll start at the beginning:

Commander Mackilligin (then XO, HMS *Mercury*): 'Good morning John, I'd like you to do me a favour.'

Ellis (then not harming anyone): 'Good morning sir, the answer is yes certainly.'

Mackilligin: 'I haven't asked you yet.'

Ellis: 'The answer is still yes certainly.'

Mackilligin: 'I'd like you to take over as the editor of THE COMMUNICATOR.'

Ellis: 'No sir.'

That was some time ago but throughout the period of my editorship I have always been conscious of the following Editorial which appeared in the FIRST issue (Easter 1947) of our magazine:

... on the other hand, you may think ours is a poor show and that you can do better yourself. To you, our friend, we say 'The remedy lies in your own hands!' Consider yourself co-opted forthwith and provided you produce the right answer we will make you a sub-editor — UNPAID and UNLOVED as we are.'

That editorial is as true today as it was 26 years ago and I would say that the first critic of the magazine was probably just as unhelpful as the critic of today whose speciality is to moan, to all and sundry, 'WHY DON'T THEY ...' when he ought to be saying 'WHY DON'T I ...'

### What is the State of our Magazine Today

For perhaps the first time in the 26 years' history of our magazine we are viable and have money in the Bank. There are a number of reasons for this happy state of affairs and I think it right and proper to record some of them and, on your behalf, to thank those responsible for their initiative and/or endeavours

To Commander P. A. C. Harland — Thanks for suggesting we might sell stationery items through the magazine similar to the magazine 'THE WIRE'.

To Lieut M. Murphy — Thanks for your endeavours in selling these items at a good profit both to our readers and to our magazine. And also for introducing the 4-year plan which added about 500 to our readership.

To Lieut A. Fields — Thanks for your great efforts in boosting the sales of stationery items, and for providing our readers with such a good service.

To Lieut A. E. Knight — Thanks for having to account for all the above.

The state of the readership is that, notwithstanding reducing numbers in our Branch, we sell roughly the same number now as we have done over the past decade. To be more precise the answers in CODAP to the question about THE COMMUNICATOR were as follows:

How many purchase own copy? .. .. .	793
How many read chum's copy? .. .. .	652
Others (did not answer or buy etc) .. .. .	228

1673

But, best of all, and despite a 3-year period when our magazine absorbed more increases in printing costs than in the previous 23 years of its life, it is still ALIVE when dozens of newspapers and magazines have fallen by the wayside and disappeared from the breakfast tables and lounges of the general public.

Now what has the critic who says 'No-one wants the magazine' to say to all this? I have only two words to say to him!

\* \* \* \*

Over the past few years I have been privileged to receive thousands of letters from Communicators. Most of them are heartwarming. Some of them have appeared as articles in our magazine. Some have not and for this I have apologised to those concerned, the reason for not publishing them being in almost every case a question of not being able to afford the cost. Some articles have been real gems, and some — although outwardly mundane — have included a turn of phrase, or a new word, or something so original, as to make the reading of that alone well worth the trouble of reading the mundane. What is my best story for THE COMMUNICATOR? I tell it on page 298 and tell this particular one in part 'tribute' to a great friend of mine — Lieut-Comdr W. Parkin who was a warrant telegraphist and subsequently transferred to the then Electrical Branch, and now serves in HMS *Collingwood* as the Training Materials Officer. The date-time of the story is 1946 just after the formation of the Electrical Branch.

On page 251 appears the names of the dedicated Communicators who do all the work for our magazine and get little of the praise. It would ill befit me to retire from my chair without recording my deep appreciation of the highly competent manner in which they, and their respective predecessors during my term of office, have performed their allotted tasks. The unflagging toil of our fleet and assistant editors, the financial wizardry (always to our advantage) of the treasurers and the cheerful efficiency of most of the secretaries. I am conscious too of what THE COMMUNICATOR owes to its business manager, Mr Edgar Sercombe who, although he does these things as part of his living, has taken great pains to assess correctly the requirements of our Branch for over 26 years. Behind all this, of course, there are the benevolent encouragement and support of High Authority, without which all our labours would be in vain.

Finally, I bow towards our contributors, particu-

## INTRODUCING THE PLIN



This is a Plin

larly those who have featured regularly — to Ann Jewell, who never failed to produce her excellent crosswords and who ought surely to be made a Honorary Communicator; to FCRS M. J. Matthews, who, wherever he goes, sends in both an article and a greatly increased order for copies; to FCRS D. L. Alderson who wrote such interesting articles about the activities of the members of the Fleet Chief Petty Officers & Chief Petty Officers' Mess, and who continues to write intelligent articles, and to CRS W. C. Tinkler who is our man in the RNR and who serves us so well: and last but not least, all those kind and loyal ex-Communicators who buy and read our magazine just to keep in touch.

And to say good luck to my successor and to ask you to give him the same support you have given to me, and good luck to THE COMMUNICATOR and to the worthy Branch it serves.

---

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I would be grateful for an opportunity to express a personal view on certain points in Mr D. L. Alderson's articles (Summer Edition).

May I start by correcting, I hope, the number of hours worked in a two watch system referred to in MORSE and MOTIVATION. According to my calculations, and they are proven practically, the total hours worked in one week is 84. I purposely discount the three hours turn to time mentioned, as any work required to be done should not entail off watch personnel turning to in this system. The only other work that needs to be done is that of cleaning up the Mess, which takes a very short time with all hands in. Surely any work that needs to be done would be tackled by all three Sub Departments of the branch during a quiet period when hands might be spared. Obviously these hands would not all come at once,

due to the varying tasks being undertaken by the different departments, but under a Management System which is being worked in most ships these hands can be controlled and supervised effectively, or can they?

The second discrepancy, or deliberate mistake I note, is that there seems to be a four hour addition to the number of watchkeeping hours. Does Mr Alderson seriously believe that this is enough time for the daily 'bath and dhooby' and the four meal times per day? Giving the unfortunate Communicator fifteen minutes per meal, must add seven hours to the total and of course an ulcer at the end of a few year's service, (I wonder how many Communicators are P7R in the varying rates). If in any way the total of hours worked are as stated in the article we rely on our Senior Rates to change the system and protect us from such slavery. Although I can truthfully say that the Management system worked on the *Devonshire* would never allow us to fall so deep in the mire. In my watch I can be sure that things will get done. The reader may think that it would, or should, be possible to revert to three watches, but may I put to Communicators that you would rather, definitely on this ship, do two than three watches, allowing stand-offs, and we shudder when the Gods mention four, at sea.

In short I cannot believe that a ship working a two watch system keeps to 91 hours a week, if this is so there must be room for the thought that Mr Alderson has found one of the reasons why he should 'shudder at the number of mishandled, garbled and/or badly distributed signals'. Could this also affect job satisfaction.

Agreeing with Mr Alderson on the point of traffic volume and unnecessary signals in Joint and NATO exercises, this brings me to think, do NATO countries other than ourselves, realise that they are overloading, or is it their normal practice? Certainly the Americans thrust signal traffic of book proportions at every conceivable chance before exercises, such as sending a complete change to an OP-ORD by eight separate signals, in sections ranging from two to seven per signal. This definitely caused frustration in *Devonshire* not because of the handling internally but the number of services sent for reruns and ZDK's due to bad conditions (just north of Gib) in order to provide a readable copy.

When the 'Andrew' were conducting their own large exercises such as 'Fotex 65', traffic was not wasted I am sure. Room for thought here is a Communications Liaison team to advise the Americans (as I doubt if all NATO countries push out such traffic) before a large exercise could be despatched to the exercise Commander. A job I would like to think that should fall into the hands of the Author of MORSE and MOTIVATION, and his contemporaries.

To refer to Job Satisfaction, Communicators do their best I am sure. On *Devonshire* the large amount of seetime and the affect of many hours on watch during exercises and Portland type training periods,

combined with Trickle drafting and the new way the Executive Branch runs (Shipwide Tasks, Gangway security, sentries, etc) does affect job satisfaction. For instance in the old days all the sparker had to look to for job satisfaction was his Radio sets and his Morse combined with procedure, plus the bit of cleaning around his department. This also applied to the bunting and his coveted Flagdeck. Nowadays one can guarantee that the Sparker or Golly will be working side by side with the Bunting on the Flagdeck and vice versa below decks, demoralising? Maybe. A daily fire muster and practice, never done by an RO2 in my time, we now take part in this essential drill and can assist greatly, especially when the real thing occurs. The Mess, there has always been one; ours has a carpet and bar provided and made and fitted all by Communicators over the last two years. Neither are 'Communications' but there is job satisfaction, because a job has been done well.

Another disadvantage for the Communicator's satisfaction is the great gap between RO3/JRO and his RO2 or LRO. A man joining a ship for training has to be used for watchkeeping duties in two to three watches. The old cry of 'how can we learn if there is always a killick behind-us' applies even for RO2's, but would you leave them on their own as LHOW and risk the consequences? One has to, otherwise how can they have job satisfaction? The obvious argument is that they get satisfaction from learning and passing for higher climbs, all of our RO3/JRO's will be passed for, if not rated RO2 before they leave the ship, that gives our Chief Yeoman and the three killicks job satisfaction, we will have succeeded in the job of instruction. Self instruction off watch and long hours have been conquered by the successful RO3. Instructor time on a ship is extremely valuable, as everyone knows, but it is used to overflowing proportions due to the vast gaps in knowledge. *Mercury* in all its wisdom is not helping the younger man's job satisfaction. Self instruction is boring to the majority, as I am sure all seniors have been advised from time to time by the individual. If practical standards of a trainee and RO2 were raised would there be a few more valuable hours instruction at sea? I think so.

Recruits to the Navy join for the money and because the money is quite good that is why they stay. It is just a job nowadays and they can only perform to the standards they have been trained.

How do you approach an RO2/3/JRO or even killick who says I have lost interest? Thankfully I have not lost interest since 68 but I would be very grateful if an answer could be provided. My theory is that most people lose interest on a ship or at *Mercury*, and that they nearly always come from a COMMCEN and are out of touch, what instruction is given at these establishments, to keep alive the sea going routines and jobs? A great help to them would surely be more trust in their capabilities and less bombardment from the old school. Everyone knows that a killick and above know what they are doing, or should do, so let us think more about the modern

Navy and improve it.

To finish this letter I would like to point out that the photograph of Mr D. Alderson discussing 'FLEETWORK' with fellow Communicators, seems slightly derogatory to Buntings to say the least. As the Editor of THE COMMUNICATOR gave us all a warning of what was to come in the Winter edition I feel that none of the people in the photograph could know much about Fleetwork, they are certainly not all discussing it, and could they make use of it?

I look forward with interest to the coming article from Mr Alderson.

Yours aye

LRO(T) D. E. JAMES  
HMS *Devonshire*

#### By the Author of Morse and Motivation

The views expressed by LRO(T) James (as in the above letters) of the *Devonshire* are most interesting and worthy of further comment.

Whether one agrees the number of hours worked in a two or a four watch system is not important, the main theme of that part of my article was simply to illustrate the number of hours worked by a Communicator at sea and the conditions under which he works, as compared to other branches. In fact, if a straight two watch system is worked for a week, one watch would do  $86\frac{1}{2}$  hours, the other  $81\frac{1}{2}$  hours and of course, a reversal the following week.

The figures quoted in my previous article were worked out by one of the watchkeeping LROs and, if there were any mathematical errors, they must have been due to his mental tiredness of being in two watches for too long!

I take LRO James's point about meal hours and time for 'bath and dhobey', but however well managed a department, one can only provide X number of bodies for Y number of commitments into Z number of hours. Not everyone has the problems for example, of queuing up for meals. When *Bulwark* had a full Commando Unit embarked, this was a fact of life in an LPH that watchkeepers had to contend with.

The whole purpose of highlighting the number of hours and the level of continuous work involved when on watch, coupled with 'other ship' duties and commitments, was to put forward these facts as an example of one of the reasons why the present day Communicator has apparently lost his image as compared with his counterpart of yesteryear (adequately described in CRS Tinkler's excellent article 'The Old Order Changeth', published in the Spring edition).

I am sure we all agree that traffic levels have continued to soar and have resulted in unacceptable time delays, particularly on Fleet Broadcasts during major NATO exercises; but as for an RN Communications Liaison team to *advise* the Americans on how to run the show — this is a matter to be sorted out at Staff level. However, I fully agree and sympathise with LRO James regarding the appalling system of sending Op Orders by broadcast in huge sections and appendices. (Those who were involved

in 'Dawn Patrol 73' will no doubt recall the whole dreadful experience).

The fact that these huge Op Orders had to be signalled is in itself an indictment as to the inadequacy of our vast range of ATPs and ACPs which should of course cover the basic principles of agreed Allied tactical doctrine. Apart perhaps from a few minor amendments, an exercise Op Order should be based on current Allied publications (up to a specified Change number) and the necessary Complan published in order to accomplish the exercise objectives.

There is much to be gained from having a Communications Liaison Team at the middle management level prior to any major NATO exercise. However, one must remember that work is generally progressed on Op Orders at a very early stage and they are often produced some six to 12 months before an exercise; much of the communication organisation will have been drawn up by Communication Staff Officers appointed to those Command authorities who sponsor the exercise.

Unfortunately, the earlier one produces an Op Order, the less realism will be achieved by that exercise. Ideally of course, the best method of assessing the value of our Allied Tactical publications and associated Complans, is by signalling ships and other units of various NATO Navies, order a rendezvous at short notice and instruct them to carry out an exercise objective.

Regarding OJT for juniors at sea. It is quite clear that *Devonshire* is making commendable efforts to provide the much needed and valuable training at sea. The problem is of course, the making up of this gap in their professional knowledge by ships' staffs, in conjunction with conflicting commitments, ranging from the operational to the communal.

Finally, I should like to point out that the photograph taken on *Bulwark's* flagdeck was not published with my original caption. (It was in fact taken whilst entering Gibraltar and the soldiers were members of the Royal Corps of Signals, embarked for a 'Jocomex'). The Editor altered the caption with absolutely no intention of being derogatory to the Buntings, but merely as a joke (which LRO James clearly seems to have missed!) to illustrate the unique and unusual situation whereby the ASCO (an ex Chief Sparker) should actually be seen on the flagdeck, closed up at his Special Sea Duty station!

Yours sincerely,

Mr D. L. ALDERSON, FCRS

Dear Sir,

May I say how disappointed I was with the Summer Edition?

It was sad news to me to learn from Mr Alderson's article that some of my colleagues state that my initials are aptly descriptive. And to imply that my experience was restricted to CW was equally unkind. It is not for me to challenge the first point, of course, but I can claim to have been the Chief Sparker of the first fleet unit to be fitted with RATT. (Not *Vanguard*

which was fitted out with 'one-off' equipment for the Royal Tour). Moreover, I was teaching it as far back as 1957 when, I confess, it was less sophisticated but more interesting.

Another point arising out of Mr Alderson's article is the fragrant and repeated misuse of the English language which you, Sir, had condemned in the Editorial of the same edition. From the verb 'communicate' we have the adjective 'communication', which may also be used as a noun, of course, but never, never according to my dictionary 'communicatorial'. Shame on you both.

My original article was submitted in response to an appeal by the Editor for controversial articles, and it was sad to note that not one of the new generation took up cudgels on behalf of the communicator (with a small 'c'). LRO Poynder's letter from Portland was interesting, particularly in the second paragraph, but even that letter opened with a recommend for my communicatorial adversary.

Yours sincerely,  
CRS W. C. TINKLER

*Mr Alderson's reply to the above is as follows:*

Dear Sir,

May I say how sorry I was to read that my communicatorial comrade was disappointed with the Summer edition.

In particular I was distressed to read that my learned friend had drawn entirely the wrong conclusions regarding my quip of his initials. The remarks were made in good faith, and, you may recall Charles, that you raised no violent objections when we discussed the article over a noggin — *before* the article was published. Furthermore, my statement of your 'long and stimulating interest in the Communication Branch' hardly depicts any suggestion of insularity of experience restricted to C. W.

At the extreme risk of being picked up once again of the flagrant misuse of the English language, may I say Charles — **KEEPASENSAHUMA!**

Finally as to the use of the word communicatorial; it is used in exactly the same context as the adjectives Pictorial (pertaining to pictures), Territorial (pertaining to territory), Managerial (pertaining to management) and Parochial (relating to a parish). Communicatorial relates of course, to communicators; if it does not appear in your dictionary Charles, it is high time that you purchased a more comprehensive one!

Dear Sir,

May I be one of a suspected potential many to congratulate FCRS Alderson's article on his modern day appraisal of the Communication Branch.

I am sure there are the few exceptions who haven't experienced the problems encountered, the long hours without recognition, apart from remonstrations when machine falls over but man bears the brunt.

We in a more responsible position as part of the management may be able to accept it all in its true light, but for what reason, the good of the Service,

or would it be self preservation, indeed the largest task of the supervisor's lot is trying to motivate the operators to maintain the already lowering of efficiency standards in order to run his department satisfactorily, to quote a commonly used Portland word.

Who is prepared to furnish us with all the answers to maintain this motivation, why on a foreign visit, everyone, with the exception of a sprinkling of MEs and others, manages three runs ashore from four while the Communicators are in a struggling 24-hour watch system, invariably snowed under due to impending exercises, or the next visit, and who probably needs his 24 off to prepare himself physically and mentally for his next 24 on.

There is no need to repeat or amplify FCRS Alderson's already adequately pronounced problems, but the most pressing and alarming problem was not mentioned, that of the operator's answer to it all — PVR. I cannot quote any general statistics on this subject, but in my present draft it is approximately 32 of a staff of 49, and the recent DCIs on PVR indicate that the Communication Branch aren't exactly bottom of the league. It would be nice to say that the PVR candidates represent only a minority of idle and malcontents we can do without, but my personal experience is that most of them are hard working and efficient operators we can ill afford to lose.

I am sure that I cannot provide the answers to the many problems within the Communication Branch, but a step in the right direction would be to have a very influential Communicator who is prepared to listen tolerantly to the problems, and air them in the right direction. I am sure without doubt he would have the backing of everyone who has any amount of job satisfaction and pride in the Communication Branch, past and present, who doesn't need much motivation to work for the common good of the Branch and the Service as a whole.

Yours aye,  
RS B. W. McCoy  
HMS Tiger

Dear Sir,

I was most interested to read LRO(G) Poynder's article in the Summer/Autumn edition of THE COMMUNICATOR. It is most encouraging to see some of the younger members of the Branch making the effort to put pen to paper and making some useful contributions in the way of constructive comments.

The first point I should like to make about his article is that the list of abbreviations contained in Annex Alfa to RNCP 9 is authorised for use with signal messages, whereas in practice, far more are actually used throughout the Fleet. The point is, if there is a requirement for using additional abbreviations, the users themselves should propose their inclusion in Annex Alfa in order to legalise their use and thus provide a more realistic list that is available to all message Drafters and readily understood by all Communicators.

Secondly, the use of ACP 131 for abbreviations. The Table of Abbreviated Plain Language in this publication is designed for use with Operating Signals. I am sure that LRO Poynder is well aware that the increasing use of RATT circuits brings about a reduction in the amount of traffic passed of morse circuits, and hence the use of Operating Signals. Furthermore, Operating Signals were designed to condense plain language so as to save 'circuit time', a factor which is of less importance on a 75 baud RATT circuit as compared with a hand speed morse circuit. Indeed, apart from certain procedure messages and Broadcast Watch signals, Operating Signals (and hence their associated table of abbreviations) are seldom used in the RATT era.

Thirdly, regarding the use of COSIR; we cannot ignore the procedures used by our NATO Allies, particularly the Americans. Whilst I agree that COSIR is a JANAP 128 abbreviation, we cannot work in complete isolation, since most of our UK/US exercises will generate an enormous amount of JANAP 128 oriented traffic and we must therefore be fully aware of those procedural abbreviations.

Regarding the use of other department's handbooks and publications and their own abbreviations, this is fine, providing they are used exclusively within those departments in their own documentary system. It is only when these abbreviations spill over into signals that the trouble starts that inevitably leads to confusion, garbles and mistakes.

Finally, the question of the rationalisation and updating of communication publications. *RNCPs are only as good and as up to date as the User cares to make them.* The sponsors of RNCPs, in the DNS Staff at the Ministry of Defence and in the Publications Section in *Mercury*, do not possess a crystal ball. If something requires changing, or you wish to modify, update or propose something new — tell them!

I should like to close by asking LRO Poynder how many times he has criticised various publications; how many times he has muttered '*They ought to do something about this*' and how often he has actually sat down and thought about it, put pen to paper and actually proposed an amendment or made a constructive comment in order to improve a particular publication — for approval by his SCO? If the answer to the latter is seldom, or never — then he is not alone!

Mr D. L. ALDERSON,  
FCRS

(By editor, — The view expressed in the italicised sentence is strongly supported)

Dear Sir,

Firstly I must point out that no matter what CRS Hilder might say this is not a letter bomb, as was the case when I wrote to him recently. Not that it was one, but that's what he thought when he saw the stamps.

You will see that I have submitted an article for *THE COMMUNICATOR*, which if not entirely true, does

in some way relate to what really happened during the time that I was CBM of HMS *Mercury*. I was, you may recall, Buffer from June 1971 to the end of my service in July this year. And I shall always look back on that period, as the most memorable of my 23 years. While reminiscing with Comdr Harland over a farewell drink, some of the unusual 'happenings' came up and the Commander said that if I found time I should send some of them to *THE COMMUNICATOR*.

You now have my first attempt, and should it prove useful then I will send more. I'm afraid that they will need editing and correcting but I was after all a Ch.El. and not a Comms man.

You will see from the address that I'm now employed by Lockheed in Saudi Arabia. I am in fact at a site some 60 miles outside the Holy City of Medina, which is forbidden land to 'unbelievers' like myself. So without the distractions of 'birds & booze' I have had time to recall the 'life & times' of a 'Mercury Buffer.' (I think that another *Mercury* old boy may have used that already.)

I trust that *Mercury* remains the same as always, and I intend to come up to the CPOs' mess when I'm home at Christmas. I would like to see this year's Panto, but I will be home too late for it. You could though, remember me to Lieut Sayce and his good lady, and wish them luck in this year's performance. I might add before I close that in the story only the names have been changed to protect the guilty.

Yours faithfully,  
E. F. O'Brien

(By editor — His story appears on page 258)

Dear John,

I have just received a true gem of correspondence from a local lad: I feel sure you will find room in *THE COMMUNICATOR* for it, if only to point out that Morse is not quite dead! Here it is:

'Dear Sir,

I have pleasure to inform you that I am very interested to learn the (Morse Code) 'System of signalling in which the letters of the alphabet are represented by various combinations of dots and dashes, short and long flashes, etc'.

I am experiencing great difficulties to enable me to learn this 'SYSTEM' here. I shall be most grateful if you could arrange so that it can facilitate my overture in this matter.

Furthermore I deem it will not be out of place to put to your notice that the Book which name is (Her Majesty's Hand Book of Wireless telegraphy of P.M.G. Proficiency Certificate) is unfindable locally and is very rarely here.

In this respect, it shall be highly appreciated if you will do what-ever you can to enable me to learn this (Morse-code). In the event that this is impossible please try to secure a book for me and also advise me whom you think can help me in this matter. If this is always impossible, please advise where I can find a similar book by send me the name and address of a book-shop or publisher's house to enable me to have one similar

book in order that I can be successful in this domain.

Since a very long time I interested to know this system of communication, but unfortunately I have not had the favour to know whom I must contact. Finally I have decided to write to you with an idea that you are in a better position to help me. As I am young and have just got my 20 years old and I am very anxious to know this Morse-code. I am sure you can help me.

Hoping that you will give the matter your immediate attention and I will be favoured with your favourable reply and advise soon in the near future.

Thanking you in anticipation for your valuable assistance.

Yours faithfully  
(Name withheld)  
Lieut-Comdr J. W. Roskill

Dear Sir,

The following advert is for inclusion in THE COMMUNICATOR, preferably the jokes column!

#### FOR SALE

ENSIGNS White, size FOURTEEN BDTH, 20 in No: immaculate condition, still in plastic bags, direct from the computerised jungle. Would suit battleship/carrier (Oops too late!), could be converted for use in *Leander* with slight adjustment to the ensign staff! This bargain should be seen to be believed, will accept FOUR BDTH in part exchange.

Apply: Jack Dusty, HMS *Thames* (CMS), Southampton Docks.

Yours faithfully,  
D. Clayton, CCY.

HMS *Chrysanthemum*,  
Kings Reach London EC4Y 0HJ.

Dear ED,

I feel that now, from the safety of the Fleet, I can refer to you as ED. However, enclosed is a contribution from the Comms staff together with a cheque for £2.50 for 10 copies of the Xmas edition of THE COMMUNICATOR. There are four other communicators onboard who have, or say they have, four year subscriptions. I am one of them.

I am sure that you will be able to work the oracle on the enclosed article. It was not what I had briefed the chap on, but as it was his second attempt, I thought it better to avoid total discouragement and accept it as it stood. But for what its worth, excluding the points already covered in the article, here are a few observations on the ships programme since I have joined.

Iceland patrol has been the highlight of our employment since August. The ship will have completed two 4/5 week patrols by the time you receive this letter. Radio propagation in high latitudes has stretched the ability of ICS2 and the nerves of the RS, but apart from the sudden Auroral burst of activity, the MRL with Whitehall has proved quite efficient. Our thanks to Whitehall for their patience and help. Icebergs, 'growlers' — (lumps of ice which

wallow in the water just breaking the surface) — together with gale force winds, below zero temperatures, snowstorms and icing on the ships superstructure have been our main problems on this last trip. Watching the spray thrown up over the bow hit the FX and freeze before it can be blown more than a few inches is fascinating, but awesomely impressive. Guardrails with two to three inches of ice on them suddenly make you realise that this could be happening all over the ship. Indeed, *Jaguar* experienced severe icing in a force 10/11 with -8/ C temperatures, with up to 18" of ice and compacted snow on her upper decks. (Perhaps a phone call to them might elicit more information!)

Some of the more amusing incidents are intercepted on the trawler frequencies. Trawler skippers have not received the benefit of a course in voice procedure at HMS *Mercury*, and the choice of adjectival phrases, coupled with a cross section of North Country accents make for entertaining listening.

Our previous patrol produced large quantities of cod from various friendly trawlers who were only too pleased to show their appreciation. This trip has been rather uneventful, with the warships remaining outside the 50 mile limit. Thus, no cod fillets for Friday lunch.

The support tugs, *Englishman*, *Statesman*, *Welshman* and *Lloydsman* (the largest tug I have ever seen (2000 . . tons)), have been our almost constant companions during these patrols. OOW manoeuvres seem to fascinate them but they have a very easy life of it as they are invariably the guide. However, despite having an ex-RN officer onboard as support Commander, they have never yet been seen to hoist the Guide flag!

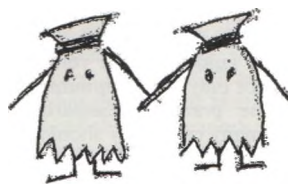
Now, on our way back to turn over the responsibilities of running the show to *Phoebe*, with our Blue-Nose certificates filed away and the SODS opera scheduled for Sunday, we're looking forward to our restful AMP early in Devonport. We will be visiting Portsmouth early in December, so anyone wishing to seem an ICS2 fit is most welcome.

Hope that will help you to fill in the gaps a bit. I have taken some photo's but haven't finished the film yet, will forward a cross-section when I get them developed. Might even run to doing the ships article myself in future.

Hope the profits are swelling,

Yours aye,

Lieut A. E. KNIGHT  
HMS *Apollo*



A Couplin

## **SPECIALIST QUALIFICATION (SQ) BADGES**

There has apparently been some confusion about the type of SQ badges to be worn by LROs and communication petty officers. BR81 art 0440(S) (Dress Regulations) state that 'A crown over basic device indicates Petty Officers qualified for higher rate of pay and Petty Officers and confirmed Leading Ratings with First Class Specialist Qualification.'

Therefore a confirmed LRO who has qualified professionally for RS, RS(W) or CY may wear the crown over basic device, this does *not*, however, apply to an LRO who has only qualified Provisionally. On being rated petty officer admittedly the man reverts to the lower scale of pay for a petty officer but he is still qualified First Class Specialisation and therefore continues to wear the crown. The only case where an RS, RS(W) or CY will wear two stars is when a man is rated petty officer having only qualified provisionally and not yet having taken the professional course for RS, RS(W) or CY.

It must be remembered, however, that there is only one issue of gratuitous badges. A man who claims his 'crown' as LRO cannot expect to receive another set when he is rated PO.

## **ARE YOU GOOD ENOUGH TO BE AN RO2?**

(by Sub-Lieut. R. M. Williams) (TD3)

Criticism has been voiced from the Fleet that the standard of RO3 qualifying for RO2 is low and indeed that this standard is not much higher after the man has passed the examination. As a result a fresh look at the method by which we allow our RO3s to qualify for higher rate has been taken.

In general the present system appears both fair and sound, allowing for the man who is away from the UK to sit the examination locally or for those more fortunate, to undergo a two week refresher course and examination at either *Mercury* or the STC Devonport.

If then the system is fair the problem may lie in another area; the content of the present syllabus or possibly the pre-course knowledge of the prospective RO2 candidate. A further investigation highlights two grey areas. The existing syllabus appears to devote far too many sessions to improving practical skills, but then the candidate's pre-course knowledge indicates the necessity of these sessions as many students arrive at *Mercury* or the STC unable to achieve the required percentage in their basic practical skills.

Should we be guided by the rules in RNCP 15, Chapter Two, not only are Communicators supposed to maintain the practical standards achieved in training but in many cases they should improve upon them. Even more important it is considered that if a man wishes to qualify and be recognised as an 'Able' operator then he should reasonably be expected to

achieve the standards of that rate. If he can, then and only then, should he be awarded a certificate of Practical Proficiency. It is appreciated that there are a number of men who are not in a position to improve or even maintain their practical standard, this will be dealt with a little later.

It is the Practical Proficiency certificate which is the key to the whole problem of producing a better 'RO2'. Once the student can achieve an acceptable pre-course knowledge we can cheerfully remove all the unnecessary practical sessions from the syllabus and utilise these periods for further instructions in the more professional subjects; Fleetwork in the case of the RO2(T) or EW Organisation for 'W' and RCE for the 'G'.

A new syllabus for the RO2 has been written and hopefully its content reflects the actual tasks of the RO2 at sea, taking into account the Operational Performance Standards in RNCP 15. It is also fair to say that a far dimmer view will be taken of those candidates who could reasonably be expected to maintain their practical skills and have not. It must bring into question the man's entitlements to a certificate of Practical Proficiency. The message, then is read your weekly biffers.

If there are candidates in ships who wish to take the examinations locally then a guide to the required standard of knowledge may be found by studying the Operational Performance Standards of the RO2 in RNCP 15. Refresher courses for RO2 are held at *Mercury* and the STC approximately every six weeks and applications should be made to the Training Plans Officer, HMS *Mercury*, or the Training Officer, STC Devonport.

For the prospective candidate who, because of his unusual circumstances cannot take the examination for RO2, or is unable to maintain the required practical standard but is qualified by service, there remains a further facility. Subject to recommendation a man may be rated Acting RO2 until he returns to a situation where he can reach the required standard (BR 1066 paragraph 1103(4) refers).

*Mercury* expects and welcomes criticism of the syllabus but believes that providing prospective candidates make the effort to prepare themselves, and providing that Proficiency certificates are only awarded in the spirit that they were intended, it won't be long before we have a more professional RO2, at an earlier point in his career.

Are you good enough to qualify?

## **BUFFERLOW BILL**

by E. F. O'Brien

The phone rang — Teaboard picked it up. 'Buffers store. Storekeeper speaking . . . hold on a minute, I'll see.' 'You here Buffer?' he asked, at the same time covering the phone with his hand, the Buffer nodded. 'Ho! here he is now,' sounding surprise, and taking his hand off the mouthpiece.

The Buffer took the phone and sat down at his desk.

'Buffer speaking.' He leaned his elbow on the desk and looked bored as he listened. Then he sat upright in his chair and with a raise of his eyebrows said 'Cows.' A pause. 'Wrens quarters.' After a longer pause and more listening his bored look turned into a grin. 'Ho! real cows, behind the Wrens quarters, and you want me to get them off the camp?'

He put the phone down as he rose from his desk. 'They must think I'm Buffalo Bill or something.' Then making towards the door he said over his shoulder 'Follow me you lot, we're heading for the last round up.' Through the sound of the SUN crossword being discarded, a voice said 'But we had rounds yesterday Buffer.'

The Buffer did not hear, for he was well on his way to the Broadwalk where there was another of those situations he was now about to deal with but was not in any naval manual. He had become accustomed to the unusual since joining *Mercury*, where variety seemed to be the order of the day. This was just another job he thought as he walked briskly ahead of the quintet that made up the BWP that day (by kind permission of the MACC).

From behind he cut a fine figure of a man, in a suit that would just about last out the year he had left in the RN his shorty seaboots (which he felt was his right to wear) and his cap worn at the same angle as the number three picture on the 'Don't wear your hat this way' poster in the Reg office.

On arrival at the swimming pool they stopped and, gathering his men around him, the Buffer pointed at three cows behind the Wrens quarters. 'There they are, Hookey.' He turned to the leading hand. 'Take two hands and head them off towards the senior rates garages.' Then, to the remaining three, he indicated for them to follow him as he set off in the general direction of XWO.

'Young heifers' one of the more intelligent RO(W)s was heard to say. 'Yes they are' was the Buffer's definite reply, as two of them ran in the direction of Droxford with the leading hand and his two companions in hot pursuit, accompanied by well known cries of the wild west (Guzz that is).

Meanwhile the other little cow disappeared behind the trees. The pursuing trio stopped and the Buffer put his hand up to his lips and tilted his head as if he had come up with some brilliant idea and said 'Scouse, you and Jan here go to the left of the trees and when you see him give me a shout.'

As that merry pair tripped gaily to the woods the leading hand came back. 'We put them into the first field on the left.' The Buffer scowled at him. 'But that's a bloody nursery you clown. Ho! never mind they'll have to stay there now.'

Just then a voice was heard through the trees. 'Buffer, he's coming, he's coming, he's gone.' They ran towards the voice and came upon Jan and the cow staring at each other. 'What do you mean?' said the Buffer glaring at Jan, 'he's coming, he's coming, he's gone.' 'I told you to stop him.' Jan looked hurt and said 'No you didn't Buffer, you just said to let you know.'

'Ho, did I? Well never mind that, what about this cow?' The heifer stopped looking at them and must have wondered at the actions of this odd collection, as he loped off up the wooded path, used so often by Jolly Jack and Jenny Wren, and followed the same direction as his companions.

'He's getting away,' cried a voice, whereupon our merry band of rough riders, with cries of 'Yipyihay' (or words to that effect) chased after him, and he too disappeared into the same nursery field.

'Right' said the Buffer. He always said that when he couldn't think of anything else to say but felt that he had to say something. 'Right lads, back to the store. Teaboard, pour me out a cup of tea and I'll drink it after I've seen Jimmy.' He then turned and headed for the 1st Lieutenant's office.

He poked his head into the office; XL was with the 1st Lieutenant. 'Howdy Big Jim' he said and with just the hint of a smile on his face he touched his cap with one finger. He continued 'Round up complete, just headin' for the bunk house for chuck.'

The 1st Lieutenant looked unamused as he peered at the Buffer through his glasses and said 'I beg your pardon chief.'

XL nearly fell off his seat. The Buffer gave a little cough. 'Well sir, we've rounded up those cows and got them off the camp. I'm now on my way back to the store for standeasy.'

'Thank you Buffer' said No 1, and he turned to XL who had his mouth open as if to make some comment. He didn't get the chance, because the Buffer had turned and was on his way out of the building.

As the soft scraping of seaboots died away, he was heard to murmur words of wisdom about the 1st Lieutenant sense of humour and that he had been right all along. They were a lot of cowboys in *Mercury*.

## THE ART OF VS IS I'M AFRAID DEAD

by Mr D. L. Alderson, FCRS

The Art of VS is, I'm Afraid — Dead. The art of Bridgeman'ship is also dead. It is not uncommon these days to see an OOW, not only the first to see a flashing light, but able to read its subsequent message better than the RO(T) on watch! The same is also true alas, of basic halyard work or of entering harbour and other ceremonial occasions, where junior 'T' ratings are not au fait with the SOPA flag (pennant?) or absentee indicators, etc. The most horrifying aspect of this lack of VS experience is that it comes about at precisely the most embarrassing moment for the ship and thus causes another few grey hairs to develop or begets another ulcer for the SCO or the Yeoman — depending on what they ate for breakfast!

The professional ability of juniors joining the Fleet today is also causing grave concern. The problem is magnified by the recent introduction of the junior direct from training who comes to sea for 12 months

OJT (and this in addition to the temporary manning standard already imposed!) To make room for these juniors, experienced RO3s, RO2s and even RO1s are relieved early out of turn. Whilst I appreciate that these juniors are under training, most of them are, unlike Midshipmen under training, filling complement billets and therefore have to be used as watchkeepers on joining the ship. As a result of this, it is not uncommon to find that in a watch the LHOW finds over 50 per cent of his watch are *untrained* juniors and consequently finds *himself* doing tasks that he did as an RO of the watch, which, in addition to being in charge of the watch, presents him with an almost intolerable burden, and stretches the Leading Hands to the limit.

CRS Tinkler quite rightly points out that the Communicator now has a greater Ship Husbandry commitment than ever before. The Communal duties required, the 'whole ship concept', whether it involves storing ship, RAS, VERTREP, or even Town Patrols — all combine to nullify the esprit de corps of the Branch, merge us deeper and deeper into the gloomy mediocrity of being just 'ordinary working hands' and do nothing to enhance the rapidly dwindling status of the Communications Branch.

Some years ago, a Communicator was known for his neat and natty appearance and the Branch stood head and shoulders above other branches in all respects; morale, dress and expertise. The Communicator was proud to be in a branch that was the epitome of professional ability. He also knew that his expertise was of the utmost importance to the operational efficiency of the ship.

The advent of high speed, automated and complex equipment has certainly been a major factor in the 'de-humanising' of communications and the fact that we have basically become mere producers of tapes and paper pushers for message distribution.

What then, are the other factors which have brought about the current lethargy and lack of enthusiasm for the Branch? It would be ludicrous to attempt to explain all the reasons for this disastrous change, covering as it does many years, but I would suggest that the departure of the Signal Boatswain and Warrant Telegraphist must have had a lot to do with it.

These Senior gentlemen were at the very top of their professional pyramids; they were *the* Gods, the experts amongst a highly professional branch who demanded the very highest standards and it was exactly this kind of expertise which permeated itself throughout the Branch. They also exercised close control and supervision in their own fields; the thunder of these Gods would very soon descend upon the slack, idle, incompetent or careless ones! A 'Reference chit' from the FCO of FCA was to be feared much more than an appearance at the Captain's table — and that is exactly where you were headed if you did have the misfortune to receive a Reference chit!

The demise of the Signal Boatswain and Warrant Telegraphist left a gap which has never been filled. It is true of course that we have also had signal officers

for a very long time; but the difference here, as was the case with the new officers structure of 1957, was that these officers were either executive officers who subsequently qualified after a Long C course, or were SD officers who were given an 'across the board' background training in order to fit them for a wide variety of appointments and to prepare them for promotion.

We do of course have some very fine signal officers and SD officers, but it is precisely because of the requirements of their overall career pattern that such a gap was left in this vital area of Managerial Expertise. The gap was not filled by the WI and SI (later to become RCI and TCI), since these instructors were never drafted to specific jobs according to their specialist qualifications, where their talents could be exploited and used to the full.

It is too early to say what effect the relatively new warrant officer structure will have on the branch, but I would prefer to see them given the same sort of 'across the board' management training as for SD officers, in order that they can undertake a wide variety of middle management appointments, rather than see them swallowed up in insular professionalism.

Having discussed the evolutionary processes, the modern systems now in use and the changes in professional management — what of the '*man*' himself? The product emerging from Part II training in *Mercury*? How do they compare with their predecessors of 30 years ago in terms of intelligence, aptitude, commonsense, pride of the Service, love of the job and general mental ability to grasp new subjects, or as to how fast they react (if at all) to fast changing situations? What are their professional standards like on first going to sea.

Whilst it is true that the general standards at the recruiting level are lower and thus we have to accept a lower standard of entrant (as can be seen from RT and T2 test results) into the Royal Navy, which means of course that every branch suffers; but perhaps none more so than the Communications Branch. It was Admiral Lord Nelson who said during a conversation with Samuel Pepys — 'Signals — now there's a new thing, that requires *fast thought* and *quick wits*'.

It can also be said that most senior ratings and LROs are guilty in some degree of allowing their own age and experience to cloud their memory as to what *they* were like as juniors in their first ship. However, what does appal most of the older brethren is the juniors general lethargic attitude and almost complete lack of *enthusiasm* for the branch.

I can well remember getting a slap on the wrist for tuning an 89P or a TBS without the PO Tel being present, or for opening the rear door of the 87 to find out what went on inside! Nowadays, one has to drag the juniors to the equipment in order to carry out OJT! and what has happened to the 'Shop talk'? I always considered the messdeck a ghastly place to spend one's time off; the wireless office was a much better place to 'get amongst' the gear, read and make morse for practice and generally soak up the atmosphere and listen to the 'old hands' talking and

doing things of interest. We also used to talk amongst ourselves in Op Sigs, spoke of voltages, outputs, equipments and could scarcely keep our grubby young fingers off the transmitter and receiver dials (our fingers were grubby, since, as dayman, one's life started at 0600 by scrubbing out numerous offices and invariably finished up at about 2000, still scrubbing offices).

Even in later years one can recall (not so very long ago), evenings in the mess where manoeuvres would be enacted with beer mats or glasses and circuit diagrams were scribbled on the backs of cigarette packets; who can fail to remember with nostalgia the sight of ex CCY Harry Freeman singing all the verses of 'Marching Manoeuvres' (*were there 48 of them?!*) or ex CCY Tom Ryrrie doing a 'Submarine Attack' complete with command and manoeuvring instructions, using the mess vacuum cleaner as the periscope as he emerged from under the snooker table!

Shop talk may be taboo in mixed company, and perhaps I can be accused of being too anchor faced for too long; but surely when one is in a Communicator's messdeck or in *Mercury*, then this is the essence of esprit de corps and provides the impetus to instil and maintain the *enthusiasm, interest* and *professional pride* of being a Communicator.

Finally, one must comment on the almost intolerable burden being placed on ships, staffs to get juniors to reach their operational performance standards within two months of joining their first ship. The majority seem to be unable to read 10 wpm on joining, and it appears that most have struggled through their Part II course and just managed (for once) to read at 10 wpm with the required accuracy; they are then promptly sent to sea. It is a known fact, that if you want a Fleet speed of 20 wpm then you must train at 25 wpm. If you require a Fleet speed of 15 wpm, then you train at 20 wpm. Similarly, in order to obtain an OPS of 10 wpm you need *continuous* training at 15 wpm.

With so many juniors filling complement billets, their watchkeeping duties, the communal and departmental part of ship requirements plus the normal divisional activities — all present problems in providing the continuous training (particularly morse practicals) that is essential to the junior during the early, critical part of his career. Furthermore, it demands a lot of manpower hours from senior ratings and leading hands to sit and make morse at varying speeds between 8 and 10 wpm.

How then, can we motivate the juniors to read morse better? How can we improve the standard? Have we got the training right? I would not be so bold as to attempt to answer these questions, except to suggest that we have had enough turbulence in the Branch during the last 15 years or so and that it is far too early to condemn the current training system, without giving it a fair trial, although I do sympathise with those with whom I am in continuous contact, who say — 'just what *do* they teach the juniors these days?'

To conclude this article, it might be worth re-

membering that during the summer manoeuvres of 1913, Rear Admiral Hopwood wrote a poem about his concern for the 'man' when faced with the (then) new machinery coming into the Service and he implied that man may not be able to cope. Now we have turned full circle, and it seems that *we* as Communicators have become the *unmotivated* users of such machinery.

'In an age of swift invention  
it is frequently believed,  
that the pressure on a button  
is as good as work achieved,  
but the optimist inventor should remember if he can,  
though the instrument be perfect,  
there are limits to the man.'

## TRAINED APES OR THINKING MEN

by TD3

'Do we really need to know this? What a waste of time.'

'Why should we go through all this again, when we've been doing this for years.'

Common complaints such as these can be heard in any classroom.

But what if the boot was on the other foot and you were asked to construct a Course? Have you ever thought how you would go about it — where would you start? You would soon find that there are really no short cuts to course design; it is a detailed process which takes a long time.

To establish the aims of a Course it is first necessary to provide an accurate job description of the man at sea — what does he really do. In technical terms this description is known as an Operational Performance Standard (OPS). It is then necessary to establish how near to these standards a man can be trained in *Mercury*, taking into account all the classroom equipment and instructor limitations. This results in the Training Performance Standard (TPS). The TPS is the standard which the student must achieve and to which he must be tested. At last the syllabus can be written and lesson plan formulated to reflect what the student actually needs to know in order to achieve these objectives.

The Training Design team in *Mercury* is responsible for objective course design. To date one set of courses has been constructed. From Mid '74 the students who have completed the New Entry Objective course should be seen at sea. What sort of operator will he be?

It may be argued that if a man is taught that only which he needs to know to perform a task and not allowed to venture further he will become little more than a trained ape.

Our contention is that a man who can perform his task is not a trained ape, but a competent operator. Competence breeds confidence and it is a confident man who will wish to further his communication knowledge. Therefore it is predicted that the product of the new entry objective course will be able to take his place in the communications organisation as an operator and not an onlooker.

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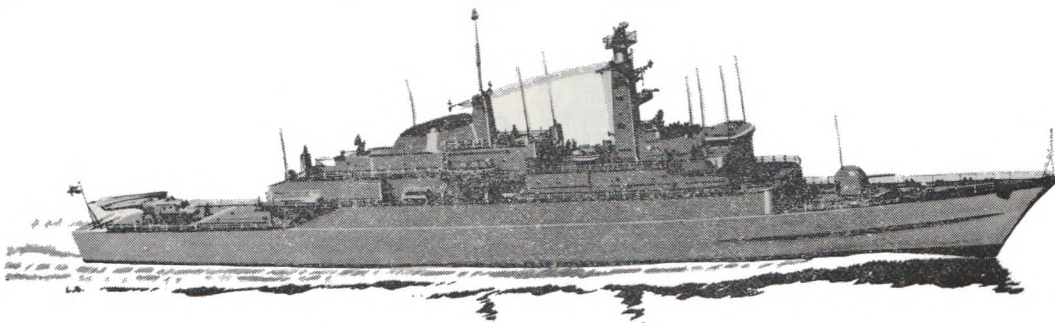
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# Fleet Section



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AFCO Lt-Cdr A. J. Christie

Staff RS(W) J. Rooney

## INTRODUCTION

Fleet Editor Lieut-Comdr A. Banham

Very many thanks to all contributors both successful and unsuccessful. We've managed to print nearly every article sent in. Full marks to *Tenacity* who in spite of her small size once again produced an article — which is more than FOF1, FOF2, FOCAS and FOSM did (the ships are doing better than the staffs!!) There has been an encouraging increase in articles and photographs. The magazine is booming, we have money in hand for once, and can therefore publish more photographs and articles than before. Join the boom and win a silver tankard for the best contribution.

## HMS AJAX

by LRO(W) Beggs

It was a miserable Monday morning when I stepped off the train at Plymouth. I hailed a taxi and headed in the general direction of HMS *Drake*. 'What ship' an RPO snapped. *Ajax* came my feeble reply. 'Here fill these in' says he, handing me loads of chits. In return for the filled in copies, he directed me in the general direction of Grenville Block, where he assured me I would find Ajax Offices.

Yes, I found the Office, I met the Staff, and we are still waiting around trying to find lots of things to do. As we will be writing articles for THE COMMUNICATOR regularly, I think it's time to introduce you to the Staff.

The Ship's and Squadron's Communication Officer is Lieut Comdr B. A. Davies. As he has recently returned from the 'Land of Didgeridoos' no doubt he will be all about on our brand new toy 'IKARA'. His assistant and 'Divisional Watchdog' for the Division is FCCY Kitchin, late of 'O' Section *Mercury*.

Now that you know who represents us up top, let's get down to the Real Workers. As I said real workers, I'd better start with the 'Gollies', for whom the definition is: 'a Communicator in the Royal Navy, cross trained in General and Tactical Communications, but a specialist in Electronic Warfare and a Radar Analyst'. 'New Entry Instructor', 'Brickwoods Field Gun Trainer', who else but CRS(W) Fred Fox. He is supported by LRO(W) King (ex Whitehall), LRO(W) Beggs (ex *Bristol*), and LRO(W) Norman. The rest of the Ws start with yet another Fox, this time RO2(W) Freddie Fox (ex *Juno*), RO2(W) Daniel (ex *Yarmouth*), RO3(W) Kitson (ex seaman from *Keppel*), RO3(W) Adamson and RO3(W) Stennett (ex *Mercury*). The wonderful world of TDCs and triple drive, which comes under the title of ICS2, is operated (or should I say may be operated) by CRS Hughes and his diligent band of sparkers. As the Chief Sparker is another ex Aussie we occasionally hear a few foreign phrases banded around. That leaves the buntings. I think we had better start with 'I'm bigger than you' LRO(T) Bugg and 'not so big' LRO(T) Winchester (ex *Mercury* and

# Marconi

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### ICS 3

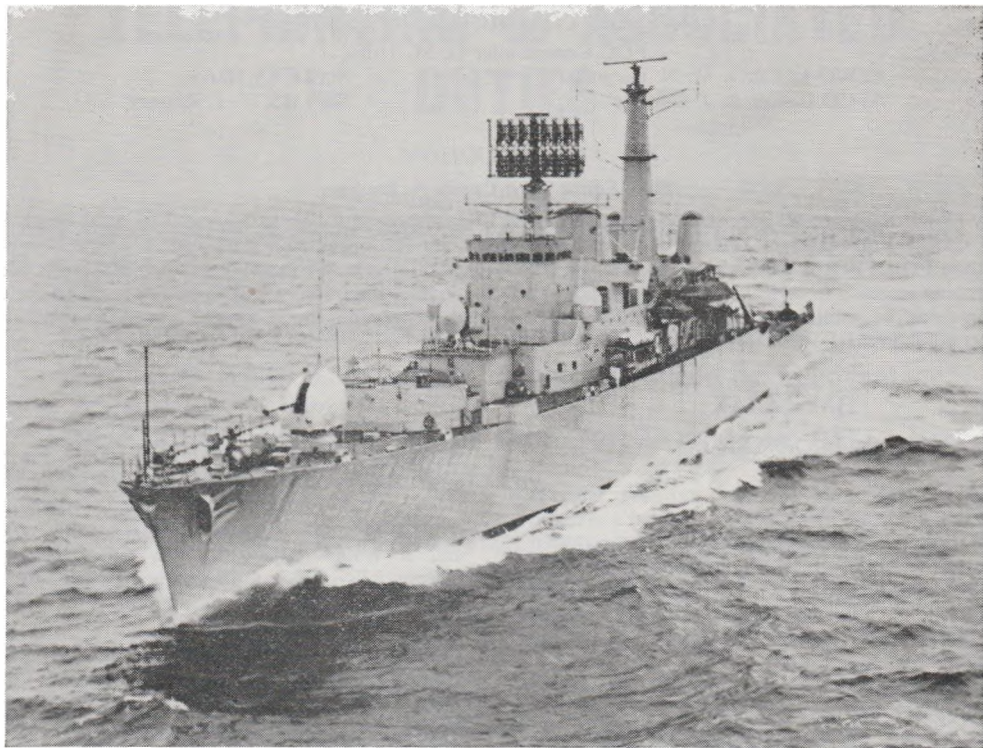
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Warrior). They are assisted by RO2(T) 'Plymouth Command rugby play' Folland (ex *Osprey*), RO2(T) Seager (ex *Mercury*), RO2(T) Gallacher (ex *Drake*) and RO/Ts Houlton and Carter (ex *Mercury*).

You now know whom we have got so you'd better stand by for lots of interesting articles from us as the Commission unfolds. (That's not until December anyway).

## HMS AMAZON

by RS S. Smith

'HMS *Amazon!* What the hell is that??' To us, only a too common remark, but perhaps this article will help lift the veil of obscurity which seems to surround us.

The first of eight Type 21 Patrol Frigates, *Amazon* was launched by HRH Princess Anne on April 26, 1971. She is the first RN frigate sized warship to be commercially designed for a long time, in this case by Vosper Thornycroft and Yarrows. Also she is the first RN warship above FPB size to be designed from the outset for gas turbine propulsion. For the purists, our statistics are length 384 ft, breadth 42 ft, displacement 2,500 tons which makes us slightly larger than a *Leander*. For propulsion we have two Olympus gas turbines for high speed and two Tyne gas turbines for cruising. The Olympi are designed to give us a top speed well over 30 knots and we should be going to Arran soon to find out.

Communications fit is the straight forward ICS2 installation utilising TDCs and CJMs and for UHF we have the well tried and tested 692s. All this synthesised equipment is great but I miss not having a free running MF/HF Rx in the office. The V/S side is pretty standard although the large enclosed bridge would be a CCY's pride and joy. There is a well laid out comprehensive Comms desk plenty of room and the chair for the Comms desk even has fitted seat belts (J. Savile please note). Unfortunately for sea-loving CCYs, we don't carry one, nor a CY, but have instead a rather awed LRO(T). To back him up there are three RO(T)s whilst the (G) side have an RS, LRO and four RO(G)s. Also in solitary splendour we have an LRO(W). This small staff size means a lot of old concepts will have to go out of the window, and no-one but no-one will be allowed to go sick . . . ever!! It does mean though that we can raise a football team and linesman (there is one more RO in the communal party) as long as the SCO does



HMS 'Amazon' at over 30 knots

Duty Comms Rate.

Currently (October) we are running from Southampton on Contractor's Sea Trials for which communications are limited to Channel 16 and 2182 with Niton. Lots of telephone calls to shore by worried looking boffins but as yet no pay increase for the RS for increased productivity. On completion of CSTs comes the enormous task of storing ship, followed by Acceptance and Commissioning in Mid 74. After that, all the first of class trials with maybe a couple runs somewhere to keep us going.

A brief name check on those standing by: Lieut B. Perowne (SCO), LRO(T) J. Allen, RO1(G) N. Wallace (who is sorting out recruiting problems in Southampton), RO2(G) K. Buckingham and myself. We look forward to seeing those detailed to join us.

## HMS ANTRIM

by Lt Howell

Constant reminders have been despatched to the Fleet by mail calling for contributions to THE COMMUNICATOR. Normally, my procedure has been to con the first hapless, yet literate, RO who crossed my path into writing an article, thus eliminating the problem for a further three months. However, with *Antrim's* return from a nine month deployment in September and my own imminent departure to Shrivensham it would seem inappropriate to shirk my responsibility again — and so I offer 'The SCO's Story'.

I have subsequently found that joining a ship at 8 am on a Monday and commencing a Med deployment two hours later is a very precipitate way to learn the job. It was only three months later, back alongside FLJ, that I began to realise the enormity of the problem. Life as an SCO is not unlike sitting on a time bomb that can go off at any time — and usually does. For those who tread this unwary path — learn the two words that strike fear into the well-groomed heart of any SCO — 'Colours' and 'Sunset'. How often is the pipe 'Carry On' followed by 'SCO — Captain's Cabin'? The following outstanding contributions have occurred:

1. At Colours/Sunset\* the Jack/Ensign\* have jammed irrevocably in the tripod on the way up/down\* (delete whichever is inapplicable — not necessarily sequential).
2. The Jack/Ensign hoisted upside down (and, better still, left at the dip whilst the rating went to report to the Chief Yeoman that the 'Jack looks a bit funny Chief'.
3. Eight Communications ratings have been known to close up for Colours.
4. Durban — our first port of call after leaving UK (where Colours had been at 0900) and too late recognised as being in the Southern Hemisphere. Nobody, but nobody, was around when the Captain appeared on the Upper Deck at 0755. A faint cry of 'better late than never' went unnoticed at 0900.

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Drawing Plin

Somehow my career survived and we proceeded to Ethiopia where *Antrim* reacted to the Massawa Navy Days with an elan that was equal to an 80 gun salute, three ceremonial sunets, 37 voluminous press telegrams and five dress ships, including one on arrival where the Captain took up a conning position astride the fore-down two seconds (and a strangled cry of 'Good Grief') before the first line was secured. However, even SCOs could not allow for the lower Inglefield clip of Princess Anne's personal standard being weak so that when pulled to break at the masthead, the clip parted, leaving the flag unbroken as the signal halyard cascaded about the signalman's head.

Around the world classified waste destruction has been a severe problem (and I am sure that this is not a problem to *Antrim* or a Fordigraph Shredder). At most naval ports paper-burning Communicators have been seen returning looking like refugees from the Black and White Minstrel Show. It was in Mombasa that the Matron of one of the local hospitals agreed that we could use her incinerator for what we reported as 60 and she heard as six sacks of classified waste. The Captain invited me to lead the cleaning party of 20 from the Department the next day and the RS had to donate a pint of blood, which must surely be the first time it has taken blood to mollify a Matron.

As we progressed around the world MRLs have come and gone including Whitehall, Cyprus (whilst in the Red Sea), Mauritius, Singapore, Hong Kong, Diego Garcia and Mauritius. Diego Garcia will no doubt leap out at those who thought that they knew RNCP 3. Although not unlike the RAF's own island in the sand, Diego Garcia is sandier and more remote. We ran a most successful trial with them and I even landed there for a 15 minute 'run ashore' — just time to exchange some notorious magazines for a Diego Garcia Crest that now has pride of place in the MCO. It was not considered as leave and so my LOA did not actually suffer.

We disturbed the passage from Durban to Simons-town by including FOF1's inspection and to the nice CPO who let off the two smoke canisters in the MCO I can only say 'You have left your mark'. With Freetown for eight hours and Gibraltar for 48 hours, (pints, rabbits) a memory we anchored at Spithead late September after nine months away.

Life as an SCO has been interesting, and occasionally serious, but nevertheless entertaining when

you are forced to send signals such as this to FOST:  
BT  
REGRET UNABLE TO COLLECT HAND  
MESSAGES THIS MORNING AS  
MESSENGER FELL INTO HARBOUR  
WHILST TRYING TO RECOVER HIS CAP  
BT

THIS SAME MEMBER of the Department was manning the signal deck as we anchored at 2300 off Gibraltar. He waited until 0200 before asking, albeit petulantly, if he could secure. Perhaps it can be considered as a variation on the same theme when an RO3 upset at the length of time the Flagship was taking to answer on Intership RATT, sent:

DE GRTE BE MORE PROMPT IN  
ANSWERING ON THE CIRCUIT  
a signal that elicited a one page reply from a distressed FCRS.

Lieut Bunting assumes the key to the MCO door shortly after December 4 and that leaves me with the slightly emotional sentiment of wanting to say 'Thank You' to the 40 Gs, Ts and Ws who have guided my footsteps from cocksure ignorance to thoughtful uncertainty. And perhaps a final mention of the communicators around the world who have helped *Antrim*, in particular those in Mauritius who strengthened the ties forged by the MRL when we stopped there for five refreshing days.

*Antrim* re-appears in the Fleet next summer which allows me to use the only opsig I have been allowed to learn — ZUJ.



"TAILS I WIN, HEADS I AM OFF"

## ***Vacancies for Trained Personnel***

There are vacancies for communications trained personnel with experience in the use of teleprinters. Experience of cypher work would also be an advantage. The posts are London based and entry is by selection.

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Applications should be addressed to the Personnel Officer.

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## HMS APOLLO

by Dave & Hardy — Two ex LROs — we will be when the SCO sends this

This is the very first article to THE COMMUNICATOR from *Apollo*, could it be that we have the ex-treasurer as our SCO!! Anyway, it won't be the last.

Our crew consists of the skipper, Lieut. 'Bogey' Knight, and his three 'Wheels' RS(G) 'Middle class — I also run a Rover 2000' Marshal, CY 'When I was on the Newfoundland' Richardson, and RS(W) 'Time in harbour is time wasted' Edgar. (Drafty take note of that). This fearsome quartet is ably backed (or is it held up) by the 'Beastliest' communications staff in the fleet.

To the 'bosses' among the readers you will notice that Sub-Lieut Arts 'you can see the footmarks on our backs' Kerrison has left us. He was last seen heading in the direction of STC Drake, so watch out you lucky people down there, you may not see him (he's RA) but you can certainly smell his pipe. His last words to the staff were 'Don't forget my run in Guzz'... WE WON'T... YOU'RE PAYING.

For all you barracks stantions who don't know much about ships 'these metal objects that float and have hairy things crawling all over them'... that's us! *Apollo* is an ICS2 fitted Leander and incidentally (we never brag) she holds the record for holding an MRL THE longest.

We are very 'up tight' at the New Entry Division at the moment, SURELY you made a mistake in sending RO3 Hardy to us. We can definitely prove he is a one man demolition squad and worse still he's soon to become a Ship's Diver. Getting away from the point for a minute, a lot of lads are leaving the Fleet soon... minds made up only lately... I wonder why! I won't say what Branch he is in but its not (G) or (T).

Sportwise the staff provide the bulk (in one case the heaviest) of the ships soccer, volleyball, rugby and basketball teams. Oh! we nearly forgot, we can field a pretty good 22-a-side drinking team.

Any junior who finds he has a draft to *Apollo*... fear not, we never get seasick on here, we spend so long at sea that we get landsick.

Before we close Bunts always has some thing to say when it comes to 'faux pas'. Whilst firing a gun salute to Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Arabian ensign (£45 worth borrowed from RFA *Tidesurge*) somehow managed to fix itself quite firmly to the guardrails on top of the mast!!! There is only one thing to do when that happens and Bunts did. Oh! they brought it down right enough, minus half of it — lovely mess it was!!! Rather than part with £45 (which he claims he didn't have anyway) our youngest minded Yeoman in the mob, spent all night sewing it back together again. Some blokes will do anything to save money!!!

Well readers, sorry for such a 'short' article (it will be when ED gets his hands on it), (it is shorter... ED) tara from the communicators of the *Apollo*, look us up when we're in harbour, which isn't very often at the moment, WE LOVE YOUR BEER.



Replica of Ark Royal's ships silver bell presented to the City of Leeds

## HMS ARK ROYAL

Much of the advice given to us today includes the saving and investing of our monies for our personal future. During World War II saving was encouraged to secure the future of our country. This was achieved by Government Sponsored Campaigns, one of which was a series of 'Warship Weeks'. By setting and achieving a savings target, a town or city could adopt a warship. On November 4, 1941, the City of Leeds, through its National Savings Committee, decided on a target of £3 million for the first week in February 1942. Their adopted ship was to be HMS *Ark Royal*. 10 days later, however, *Ark Royal* was sunk. This tragedy inspired the City to raise its target to £5 million; so enthusiastic were the City's savers the final total for the campaign was £9,301,293 (30 million at today's values). Other cities were anxious to adopt the next (present) *Ark Royal*, but after their mammoth efforts the honour remained with Leeds.

Since being launched in 1950 by HM the Queen (now Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother) HMS *Ark Royal* has had a very close liaison with the City of Leeds. Now the time has come for the City to bestow the highest honour possible to the ship — Freedom of the City.

The main party, totalling 400 members of the ship's company arrived in the Leeds area on October 15 in preparation for the ceremony. There have been many social invites for our representatives including a Ship's Dance, visits to Tetleys Brewery and to a German Beer Cellar in the City. The 'Stars on Sunday' Television programme have invited the ship's com-

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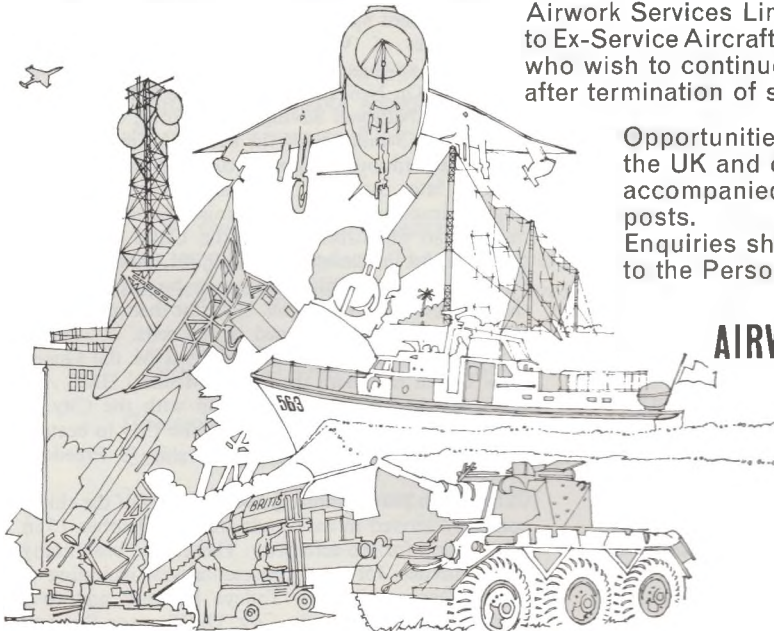
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pany in Leeds to appear on one of their programmes and this was broadcast on November 11, Remembrance Sunday.

The Freedom of the City Ceremony commenced at 1105 on Thursday October 25, when the Queen Mother arrived. As the Ships Company marched through the city, aircraft representing all the *Ark Royal* Squadrons flew past overhead, being controlled via RS Lethbridge using a 634. On completion of the Ceremony a buffet lunch was provided at the Civic Centre, then it was back onboard to chipping and painting for the lucky lads who at least have had a two week break from the refit routine.

Any reader who wishes to know more about the *Ark Royal* should see the film 'THE IRON VILLAGE' which was filmed onboard last March and is now currently on circuit with the film of Nelson 'BEQUEST TO THE NATION'.

## 'PRINT THIS OR ELSE'

'ASHANTI' SAYS HELLO  
FROM THE CARIBBEAN  
by RO(1) Keith Leadbetter

I ought to explain the title. 'Print This or Else' is a deliberate and nasty dig at the faceless men who run THE COMMUNICATOR, after the ruthless rejection of our last effort.

I'm writing this during the middle watch, which may not be the kind of red-hot news you can get all excited about, but it is necessary to say that in order to prove that not only can RO1(W)s type, they can also keep middle watches.

*Ashanti* is, at the moment, a big grey blob on an otherwise immaculately ultra-marine Caribbean, anchored as she is off the town of Belize, throbbing capital of British Honduras. They have to build their houses about 20 feet off the ground here because of the floods, so it's like Southsea on stilts.

Talking shop is always a good bet if you're going to get more space than the *Bulwark* in the magazine so I shall now pretend to have a vast knowledge of the sparker's world, and shoot down all these snowmen who think we just invent big tea boats and call them 'Training Aids'.

Comms in the West Indies could be better. In fact comms in the West Indies are about as effective as the railways, and there aren't many of those. For a start, only in Bermuda is it not necessary to watchkeep 24s about, and when you're constantly breaking into three watches at sea, it can be a strain, notably with so many one and two day visits. That is of course unavoidable, but it's a drag all the same, and extended periods in Bermuda are more than welcome when they come around.

The Canadians provide most of the Comms facilities, through C11L and their Halifax-terminated ship-shore service, but there are snags there. On the frequencies given out, overworked 640s often have coronaries trying to reach CFH during the day, and

the Canadians' great love of weird two-letter condition codes is a source of great misplaced interest. (Imagine the effect of Bravo Oscar on the uninitiated.) Whitehall can be, and is, worked on occasions, but this is only when the moon is full and the stars are right. C11L offers unique opportunities to see how much more money the average Canadian matelot gets compared with Jack, and exciting summaries of the weather over Lake Huron, but also manages to get traffic to us. Occasionally there are printability problems, but these are not as pronounced as outgoing snags.

There is also an MRL of sorts, with a very talkative and dirty-minded bunch of army blokes in Nassau (some cushy numbers in the Forces!) This is good in some areas, and impossible in others, but when it's there, very useful as a link with SNOWI, etc.

So that's the anchors-aweight but over — what about the men who hold this lot down so courageously? *Ashanti* is curiously complemented — one LRO (Dave Simmons — leading shareholder in Brickwoods and Jack Blair's Naval Tailoring) two ROIs (Pete Norris — fresh from his success as a paperweight at Whitehall, and Graham Hildred, who's been on a ship before) and three RO2s (Chris Way, doesn't go ashore, honest, and Ian Smith, who does, and looks like David Bowie when he's there) and two JROs, who make good doorsteps, tea-wetters and occasionally tactical radio operators (Dave Atkinson, who has fallen in love with every female in the West Indies, and the unspeakable Steve Harland, who gets taken for a cabin boy a lot). To keep the Red Menace at bay, we have one LRO (Trev Toy, who knows for a fact that the *Dreadnought* was a UA3 ship), an ROI (the author, who's cracked more watches, etc, etc) two RO2s (Jock Rae, to whom PVR is a way of life, and John McConkey, who is really a cunningly disguised sparker) and an RO3 (the amazing Robert Martin Butchers, without whom the Captain's table would cease to function). From this you will deduce a. That we have too many Gollies and b. that I'm going to get bludgeoned to death if this ever gets printed.

We've been through Iceland, for the benefit of anyone under the impression that HMS *Scylla* did the lot on her own, and we've earned our sojourn in the sun. Cheap rum and dusky maidens are an excellent antidote to the US Navy's marathon ops-signaling contests, and three-page signals in French about some Canadian sailor who's accidentally amputated his foot with a shoe-duster. It's not all play here, of course, but Jack gets no chance to be a dull boy nevertheless.

It only remains for me to say greetings to our ever-diminishing band of friends at home, and in the Comms and DQ's of the world, and to say how very much we regret the nasty things we've said about Pompey in our time.

And of course to mention the RS and Yeoman, because it's 264 time again. RS Colin Baxter (who owns Portishead Radio, or at least finances its operations) and CY Ben Hale (of whom it was once said 'who') . . . you've got the last word again.

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# HMS BACCHANTE

## A ROYAL VISIT

by Sub-Lieut A. W. Pomphrey

The word went out from MOD Navy, deep in the concrete jungle of Whitehall. 'Find an efficient, supersmart ship for the Queen with her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, to visit at Portsmouth on Friday, July 20.

CinC Fleet confidently accepted the challenge and relayed the message to his subordinate commanders who, panic stricken, checked their lists. Fleet Form 10's were checked, and re-checked, Portland Work-up reports scrutinised, alas to no avail. A quick phone call to Flag Officer Sea Training produced a startling result. HMS *Bacchante*, by far the smartest and most efficient ship in the fleet was at that moment shaking up the Portland staff. This surprised almost everyone north of Weymouth as it was generally believed that the ship was still chocked up in a Chatham drydock

The machinery was set in motion, meetings were held with almost everyone who was anyone. Further meetings were then convened to discuss the content of the previous ones. Time, however, passed fairly quickly — except during the meetings — and before you could say 'Queen Elizabeth' the great day was upon them.

The ship looked splendid, immaculate both inside and outside; the Ship's Company had risen wonderfully to the occasion and everything that didn't move was polished. Wives, mums and dads, fiances and girl friends, brothers and sisters or just good friends had been invited to share this memorable occasion and it was obvious that they also shared the pride the sailors had in their ship.

It was, of course, a wet and windy day even although the Portsmouth Area had, throughout the previous weeks, been suffering what could only be described as drought conditions! However, the ship, in anticipation had gone to enormous lengths to ensure a smooth, incident free visit. Even the Met men had been consulted. They had stated that the day

would be dry with clear skies — with this information still red hot the royal umbrellas were brought to immediate notice . . . supersmart?

The Queen and her entourage arrived exactly on time — for those amongst you who are interested in such matters she was resplendent in a bright green summer coat with matching hat and accessories. Philip, of course, was dressed as an Admiral of the Fleet. He seemed to be thoroughly enjoying himself amongst, even now, what must be slightly familiar surroundings. The Royal Party ascended the gangway and were met by Adml Lee Spalding, who presented the Captain to Her Majesty and His Royal Highness. After the Officers had been introduced, the Queen, accompanied by the Captain, commenced a conducted tour throughout the ship; commencing forward. The Duke of Edinburgh, it is rumoured, conducted the First Lieutenant throughout the ship commencing from aft! While walking through and about the ship they met many Communicators either going about their work or taking part in some of the static displays which were 'put up' for the royal visit.

The families and friends of members of the ship's company were not to be forgotten, after they had signed the Captain's visitors book the Queen and Prince Philip bade farewell to *Bacchante* and returned to the jetty where they walked-about amongst the families who appreciated this gesture very much indeed. All too soon the Royal Standard, which had been flying from the Fore since Her Majesty boarded the ship, was struck and the motorcade disappeared towards HMS *Victory*. Only the photographs the royal trimmings on the gangway and f'csls remained as evidence that they had been aboard. However memories linger on and I'm sure those who were present for the occasion will always remember it as a high point in their career. The families and friends were invited onboard to have tea. The ship quietly commenced preparing for the next ceremonial occasion, soon to be upon them: Cowes Week '73.

We, in the Communications Department of HMS *Bacchante*, would, in closing, like to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year — we will be spending the festive season alongside in Hamilton, Bermuda. Our sympathies go to those who will be spending theirs at sea.

## HMS BULWARK

by S/Lt P. L. Threlfall, SDEX(C), RAN

Once again it is time to produce an article for THE COMMUNICATOR, but now that our Fleet Chief Recording Scribe (better known as FCRS Alderson) has left us, this enviable task has fallen squarely into my lap (who said 'Strines' can't write).

Since we last went to print the complement has changed somewhat, with FCRS Cokes taking the chair as ASCO; LRO(T) Lonsdale taking up residence in *Neptune* has been relieved by LRO(T) Berry (complete with pet budgerigar), LRO(G) Danbury joining from the College of Knowledge having



The Duke of Edinburgh talking to RO3 Hegg — the ship's 'group's' drummer

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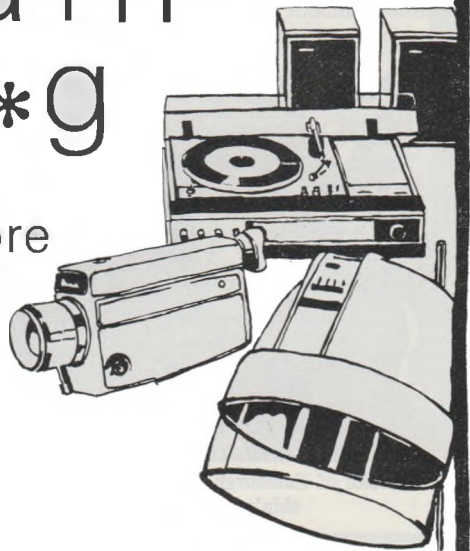
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**LRO(G) Brown showing the Army how it's done during a JOE's 'Comex'**

successfully completed the RS course relieved L/A LRO(G) Streames who left for the Mystic East (HMS *Tamar*); RO2(G) Bryan, RO2(G) Tate and JROs Green, Goodier and Truscott all joined prior to leaving for the Sunny Med and WORK.

*Bulwark* sallied forth with a great deal of gusto and yet again set another first for the Carriers and Amphibious ships — *Bulwark* is the first carrier to launch a fixed wing jet aircraft whilst going astern. Versatility is our motto. On completion of our visit to Scotland we returned to Devonport for maintenance to the ship and her company. During this period we were involved in Navy Days. In fact the ship was turned into the grandstand for the river display of FPB's RM Commando Units in action and aircraft activities. Over 21,000 visitors passed through the ship over the three days keeping RO2(T) Stewart busy on his last Navy Days in the Service. RO2(T) Stewart leaves the Service in December to take up a new career as an Officer of the Law (PC493).

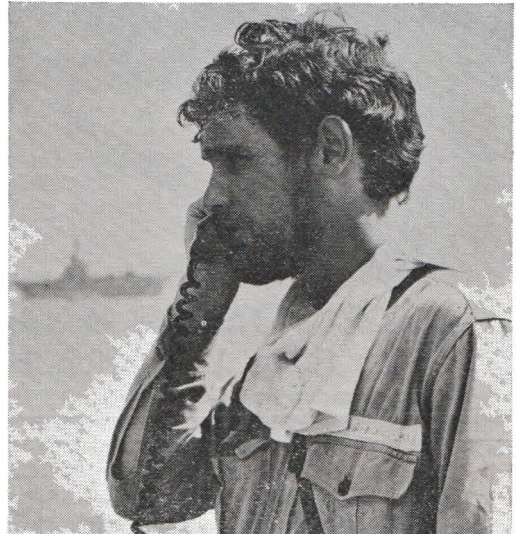
With 42 Commando embarked we sailed for Cyprus early in September. Enroute a 'Jocomex' was carried



**PC493(Desig) Stewart is kept busy during Navy Days**

with 3 Div Signal Regiment. The results were most pleasing and gave the Army, under the professional eye of Yeoman of Signals (thats an old title!) Staff Sergeant Richards, a chance to witness the Senior Service in action.

Mid September saw the 'Busy Bee' hard at work preparing for FOCAS Operational Readiness Inspection which we passed quite well despite the lack of experienced senior hands. Apart from our own departmental inspection the Communicators were involved in a 'Seamex' in the form of a towing exercise with RFA *Grey Rover*. Led by our intrepid leader, the SCO, ably supported by his communications team of RO1(G) Wroblewski and RO2(T)



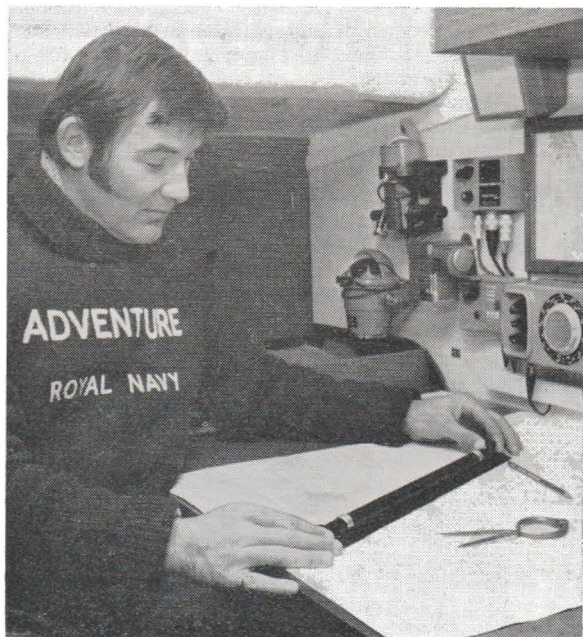
**RO1(G) Wroblewski ensures efficient communications are established**

Stewart, *Bulwark's* merry band boarded, extinguished a 'major fire', pumped out the listing *Grey Rover* and prepared for the eventual successful tow.

Still hard at it (and still without a break) Britain's expert on amphibious warfare joined other NATO units in Exercise 'Deep Furrow' in the Turkish Thrace. Under the watchful eye of NATO Chiefs of Staff and politicians from participating countries, the landing force of 3,000 United States and Royal Marines established beachheads, advanced positions and gained their objectives in a relatively short time.

Our quota of work completed, the next 24 hours was spent transiting the Dardanelles, Sea of Marmara and Bosphorus to Istanbul where we stayed five days R & R. Well that was 'our lot' and we sailed for home waters, enjoying a brief stopover in Gibraltar before arriving in Devonport for AMP.

That's all for now, our next edition will (hopefully) be written by our new FLEET CHIEF RECORDING SCRIBE !



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## HMS CHARYBDIS

by Lt J. B. Drake-Wilkes

### CHARYBDIS SIGNALS FATHER CHRISTMAS

'D'ye hear there. A fine display of the Aurora Borealis may be seen on our starboard beam.' With this and other similar pipes my heart would sink a little. The transitory beauty of the phenomenon was marred by anticipation of a messenger from the office to say that our communications link with Whitehall was ZBZ nil. My predictable enquiry about the LF component of the broadcast sometimes produced a little discomfort. The ensuing efforts, brain racking, prayers and frustration would last long after the clouds obscured the heavenly interference from our view. The first watch was thus less relished than the forenoon when a resumption of 'normal' conditions would enable us to start clearing a backlog of our own and other ships' signals before the Aurora's nightly interference restarted the cycle. Gratefully our problems were not compounded by aerial icing the conditions for which occurred only in the last few days of our patrol and were not severe. Indeed it was our good fortune to experience unusually fine weather and good visibility though this was insufficient for us to see the mountains and glaciers of Iceland fifty miles away.

Greenland, popularly believed to be where Father Christmas spends his long summer leave and keeps his toy factory, appeared on a clear horizon one day. The helicopter was duly despatched with our compliments and good wishes for the coming season. Although neither he nor his reindeers were actually sighted his friendly messenger, Miles' Boy, disguised as a polar bear happily basking on an ice floe was accosted and he undertook to convey our humble message. Receipt was acknowledged by a specially brilliant Aurora that very night.

## HMS CLEOPATRA

by The Marine Engineering Officer!

We have been in long refit since mid-July 73 and we finish October 1975. . . Sub Lieut Williams is at present resident in !!! *Mercury*, and the Communications Branch are all ME and WE Engineers!! MEIN GOTT!!

*P.S. Thank you MEO for your kind contribution in response to my letter asking for an article! Editor.*

## CINCFLEET

by AFCO

FCO was worried the other day; I can always tell when he has a problem because he punches open the hatch which links his office to mine and the corner catches me under the right ear. 'Does everyone', he asked 'understand the set-up here'. He had a point there. Some ships maintain a lively correspondence

with the Fleet Communications Staff, others ring up with problems occasionally and some preserve a discreet silence.

I would like in this short article to remind you of some of the responsibilities of the Fleet Communications Staff, to highlight one of our current problem areas and to call for ideas from untapped sources of talent at sea. FCO's task is self explanatory, FEWO is responsible for Electronic Warfare which nowadays covers a very wide field and AFCCO's main job is to deal with day to day problems. The team is ably supported by CRS Harriss and RS(W) Rooney. All members of the team visit as many ships as possible and will always try and fit in ships which specifically request a visit. Telephone numbers are listed at the foot of this article.

Now for a current problem. None of you will dispute that the greatest single factor is the man, in our case, it is the watchkeeping communicator at sea who obviously gains most of our attention. Several studies are underway to examine means of cutting back on the steadily increasing, and frequently monotonous tasks of communicators. Broadcasts are overloaded, Ship/Shore and MRLS are not always what they are cracked up to be. Satcoms are coming in in a big way with Skynet V and Scotl. This would seem to me to be an appropriate moment to have, as the politicians say, an agonising re-appraisal of the whole field of Ship/Shore Communications.

Let me give you an example: the basic facilities which exist to cover the sea area between the North Atlantic and Gibraltar are three Broadcasts, three MRLs and the appropriate CCNs. Are we using the facilities to the best advantage. What do *you* think. If you have an idea, let the Fleet Staff know; it could benefit you and Communicators everywhere. This is also an ideal moment to feed in effective uses for Satcoms.

Finally if you are too modest to write or telephone, remember that the FOF's FOCAS and URTS Staffs visit all ships. When they arrive — speak up. Just one reminder please keep your own SCO in the picture. *Telephone Numbers* FCO Northwood 26161 Ext 7165 FEWO Ext 7160 AFCCO 7164 CRS/RS(W) 7117

## HMS DEVONSHIRE

Thoughts of an SCO, Lt Cdr Davis

We all sit down and day dream occasionally or reflect on past happenings, in fact I feel that way right now . . .

. . . 'Broadcast is printing fives now Sir and we need 3 ZFGs' . . . 'Bridge MCO. Tac UHF plugged through to bridge line one' . . . The old familiar cries of the Communicator. Busy lot really aren't we. We've had quite a week of it this week and a lot of hard work has been done. What have we done? We've communicated successfully with some 20 ships and aircraft for 99.5% of the time, copied 700 signals a day on the broadcast and distributed about a 100 of those a day to some 15 recipients. We've put in about four hours a day on the

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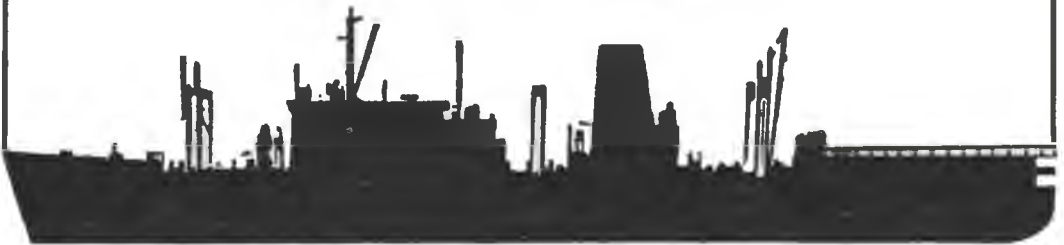
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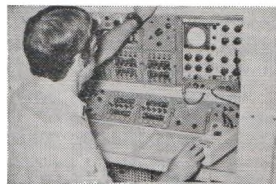
**LRO Turner  
and RO2 Lamb  
make the flags talk**



**RO3 Thompson  
prepares for  
platoon landing**



**RO2 Lamb  
RO3 Monks  
RO3 Thompson  
at 3/ Rocket Drill**



**LRO Oaks  
—C and M—Easy**



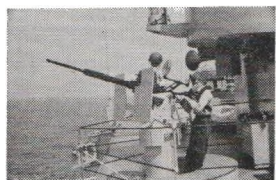
**LRO Oaks  
puts through a  
Radphone call**



**JRO Rose  
Exchange Operator  
'number please'**



**CCY Bee  
Old Habits  
Die Hard**



**RO2 Lamb and  
RO3 Little  
'come close if  
you dare'**

ship-shore, made a few Radphone calls and sent a number of telegrams. We've taken part in six Navcomex's — come to think of it, that is a pretty good efficiency rating. Of course, we made a 'boob' when one of our JROs failed to recognise a garbled signal addressed to *Devonshire*, now all the world knows about it. Tracers, what a lot of time they take up. Oh well, it was ever thus. What was it Adml Coleman said to me when we visited Philadelphia, 'Are your Communicators like ours. They can never win' . . .

. . . PVR is a problem and the ship has lost some good men to 'civvy' street. Let me see, in the last DCI 72 Communicators were named, 40 of those present were serving in ships. It seems that seetime isn't popular anymore. I can understand the problems of family separation and that advancement is slow for some but I cannot accept that discipline is a deciding factor. If a man cannot take discipline he is no good to the Service so it is best that he goes . . . Unhappy Junior, now there is a thing. I was often unhappy as a Boy Signaller when I missed Mum or I was wet and cold in a whaler or I couldn't read my flashing but I got on with it, as most of us did, and was a better man

in the end for having done so . . .

. . . LRO James is doing a good job as Leading Hand of the Mess and the mess looks nice now that they have painted it out. Tangerine bulkheads and a green carpet is fine, but a PINK SHELLHOIST. Oh well, if it breeds contentment it can't be bad . . .

. . . Sport is popular too. At the ship's swimming gala RS Jones did well to win the butterfly and LRO Wilson won a great backstroke race. The thing I like about our Department is that they all 'have a go' and you can't ask for more than that . . . RO3 Jeffery, as the ship's goalkeeper, has saved the ship a few defeats. I wonder if LRO Hart will win the Gibraltar Rock Race . . .

. . . We can now boast the fastest Field Gun Communicator in the Fleet. RO2 Huntingford was in the last Portsmouth team that produced the new record of 2 min 44.7 secs . . . great stuff . . .

. . . I had to laugh when I heard that CCY Bee put his name down for a goat shoot arranged by the Maltese Forestry Commission . . . he fell for that one. what was that signal I saw the other day . . . Your  
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**Communicators Communicating**

**LRO Ferguson, RO2 Huntingford, ROa Robinson, RO1 Davey with Miss Gibraltar**

KRK 221109Z sept. Concur . . . Nothing like playing it safe. I bet everyone in the MOD got a copy of that, including the charlady . . .

We've got Miss Gibraltar coming onboard next week. I must get a photograph of her with some of the lads . . . no shortage of volunteers I bet . . .

. . . Communal Party, now there is a sore point. Still, if they want beer, NAAFI goods, fresh food daily, Dining halls and cafeteria service etc someone has to do the lifting and cleaning. It's a tiresome business but an important one . . .

. . . We will be losing about 10 ex Juniors soon — their year is up — and getting 10 new ones in their place. Here we go again, inexperienced hands in complement billets which leads to more work and responsibility for the others. We'll make a few mistakes and take a few knocks but what can you expect when almost a third of the staff will be brand new to life at sea . . . it's very different from the classroom . . .

. . . What was that pipe AWAY CRASHBOAT, sounds like the Wessex is in trouble. I hope JRO Mellows gets to the boat on time, he's had enough practice at it. (He did) . . .

. . . Oh well, into harbour tomorrow and another foreign port visited. I expect there will be a few bloodshot eyes the following morning . . . Painful . . .

. . . *Devonshire's* Communicators are a good bunch and I am proud to be one of them. Pride, that's the thing. Communicators should be proud of their achievements and although it appears at times to be a thankless task, without communications we are nowhere . . .

. . . Crikey, look at the time . . . I must go and have a look at the part of ship.

. . . PRIDE . . . that's the thing . . .

## **LIFE IN FIFE**

**Anon**

Well it's over! Two months of windy hammers,

painting, storing and securing at five has finally ended. The DED is dead! Long live the *Fife*.

And now to sea for a mini work up. It's needed too, with a lot of new faces in the department — sorry! the Communications GROUP I should say — we've got to try and get a good team before the next drafts go in two months' time. (Isn't phase drafting a wonderful thing!) This turnover cleared out the 'W' group, a new CRS(W), RS(W), two LROs and juniors gave us a 60% change. In December it's the turn of the 'G' group.

Meanwhile we work up. First Portland! Not for us the high powered six week session common to Leanders. More of a casual 'let's break you in gently' 10 days in the Portland areas. Then, after a week of 'odds and sods' like calibrations, MITs and, of course, Families day, we go north to Rosyth for the real work up. Five weeks encompassing such delights as the JMC with its harbour phase and ocean phase and probably a couple of other phases that nobody knows about. And then there is 'the visit' — Scandinavia? I doubt it because we were there a few months ago. Well I never have liked vino anyhow. Perhaps then it will be UK. Some forgotten fishing village ready to lash up the ship's company to wine, women and song long into the night. I wish they'd tell us — probably Pompey.

January brings us our foreign leg — after another month in the hands of Pompey dockyard for an AMPr — Rumour had it as the West Indies, a tour of the Eastern Seaboard, Aussie and New Zealand with perhaps a jolly to Japan to break the boredom. On the bright side we do have a lot of juniors (hundreds of them) whom I'm sure are looking forward to their first steps on foreign land — even if it is Singers — to them: the 'Jewel of the Orient'.

On the serious side we were fortunate in being hosts to the Defence Signal Board and a member of ASWEs reps; for a day at sea. Apart from generally looking around they listened to the universal problems of poor UHF gear, the need for a paper pulping machine and teleprinters not being all they could be. They did appreciate the problem so perhaps something will be forthcoming in future to solve it.

## **FOST CXO**

**by FCRS Challinor**

In the beginning God created the heaven, the Earth and FOST CXO, it doesn't seem to have changed very much since then, but, 'Why change for the sake of efficiency'.

But seriously we are making every effort to raise the standard of the service we provide to ships. Our enthusiasm may be somewhat attenuated by the Treasury and CND inasmuch that we lack both equipment and staff.

At present we are able to provide the majority of off line training facilities with some assistance from *Mercury*. We feel that the serials we offer are outdated but as equipment and facilities become available it is

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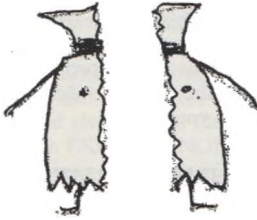
hoped to provide exercises which are more in line with Modern Naval Communications.

We are here to help the ship reach an efficient standard, and, whilst realising that ships are expected by the Command to arrive at Portland nine tenths worked-up, there is no plot to catch ships out. WE ARE HERE TO HELP RATHER THAN HINDER.

Exercises are assessed on the basis of the performance of the operator participating. It is emphasised that serials are provided for the training of junior members of the staff so that Senior Rates do not leave Portland running a 'One man band'. Ships will not be given a low assessment in the 'Navcomex's' because they are carried out by JRO/RO3s, this is encouraged rather than deterred.

There is no charge for ringing 2332 (the CXO extension) and while we do not know all the answers we will do all in our power to help. We have many contacts with the Army, RAF and Marines and the 'Jocomex' problems can be somewhat diminished due to our liaison with them. So if you have 'Jocomex' queries we can probably help a good deal.

All we ask from you is enthusiasm and up to date publications including the PCEP.



Split Plin

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### HONG KONG RIP

by DJB

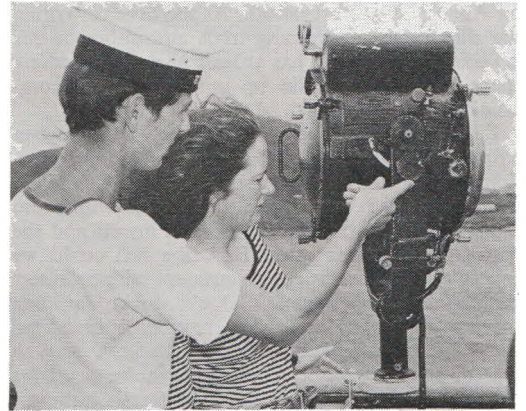
0900 local on August 1 was a nostalgic moment in the ship room of RN Commcen Hong Kong as the locally entered Hong Kong Chinese RO2 took off his headphones — GXO5 had ceased to exist and all commercial transactions were finished.

The previous week the UK staff had entertained the Chinese staff to a farewell dinner in the China Fleet Club, an event not completely dampened by the sadness of the occasion or the amount of San Mig consumed.

Currently visiting Hong Kong as her prize for being elected Miss London 1973 is the lovely Juliet Freeson who went sightseeing in the harbour area, with two London sailors from HMS *Tamar* as guides (see photo).



Miss London visits the Navy in Hong Kong With Left LRO Peter Murray of Chelmsford, and right RO Michael Barrett of Horsham



RO2 Stanbrook explains the working of a 10" signal projector to Wilmar Grant onboard HMS 'Monkton', part of the Hong Kong Squadron. The ship was used recently in film sequences for the BBC TV programme *Trans-World Top Team*. Wilmar Grant was one of the school girls who flew out from UK to take part in the quiz programme

The signals on the next page express the general feeling better than I can:

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The Officer in Charge and staff Portisheadradio wish to take this opportunity of thanking you and your staff for the cooperation and goodwill extended to them by your station over the many years of our association in ship-shore HF communications. May we also take the opportunity to wish you every success and good fortune in the future.

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In saying this I speak for many ROs past and present who would join with me saying both the Indian and Pacific oceans are going to be lonely places without you both many many thanks for your service to and from GKL and your efficient working in times of difficult QSOs. I wish all who have worked on GZO/GXO the best of luck and thank you again.

John Booth GMYE 301600+

## HMS HAMPSHIRE

by Lt Humphreys

I do not intend to bore you here with dates, facts and figures, suffice to say that after almost four years in dockyard hands refit *Hampshire* recommissioned on August 31 at Portsmouth. At the time of writing the ship is still undergoing trials and although this is becoming tedious it has at least given us breathing space in which to train up our very junior communications staff.

I'll be perfectly honest, I was utterly aghast when I first realised that 50% of *Hampshire's* communications department was to consist of JROs/RO3s direct from training. It was a situation viewed with more than just a little trepidation by both myself and the departmental senior rates. How the hell could we expect to run an efficient department with so many inexperienced operators. I don't doubt for one moment that many other ships have experienced the same feeling — and for those who haven't been to sea for some time all I can say is you've got it to come!! Notwithstanding all our fears' however, somehow, whether by the grace of God, good luck, good planning or mainly due to a very limited communications commitment, our initial period at sea has passed with very few hiccups and the juniors are gaining in experience and confidence each day and beginning to pull their weight. Mind you, if, as does happen to many ships, we had gone straight to

workup the story might well have been different and in my own view we would probably have been up to our necks in the old proverbial!!

At this point I must give a pat on the back to the effort put in by all the senior rates and the trained 50% not only in communications but also in every other way. It is very pleasing, as the SCO, to have other officers in the ship commenting very favourably on the communicators not only with regard to their job but on other aspects such as helpfulness in other jobs, standards in their mess, etc.

We have found our juniors to be very willing, eager to learn and to take responsibility, for instance, after our first week at sea and in order to speed up our traffic flow, we left it up to the junior on the broadcast to decide which traffic we required and which to ditch! Not so many years ago all he would be required to do was to tick off the broadcast numbers and pass all traffic to the LHOW. This is a luxury I doubt that very many ships can afford in this day of reduced manning standards.

I believe that all the hard work on everyone's part is beginning to pay off and the following conversation, overheard on the bridge, would seem to illustrate this. CCY to JRO(T) (recently passed for RO2 and who had just completed a job extremely well) 'Well done lad. You keep on like this and you'll soon be getting the LRO's job'.

JRO to CCY 'It's not his job I'm after chief, it's yours'!

This is the sort of attitude I like and I only hope that nothing happens in any proposed restructuring of the Branch in the future to destroy or cloud the ambitions of these youngsters.

## HMS HERMES

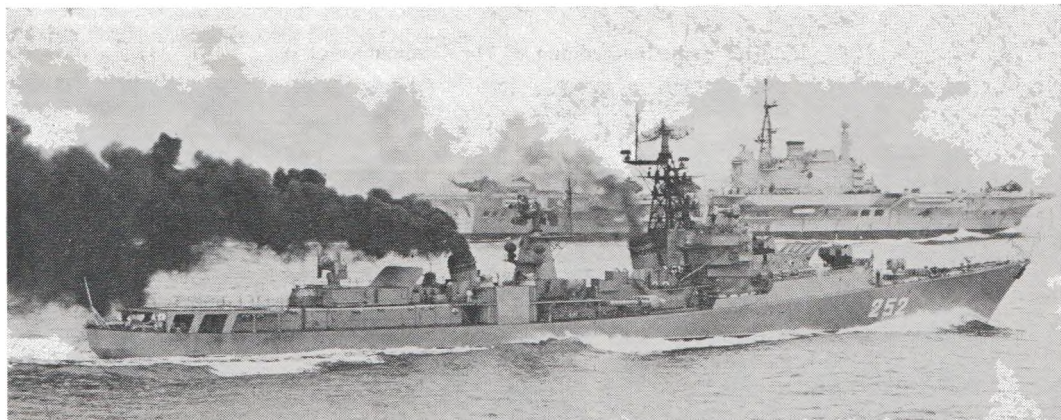
by Mr Matthews, FCRS

The ship commissioned on August 18, in the presence of a large number of distinguished guests and relatives of members of the ship's company. The guest of honour was Lady Soames, whose mother (Lady Churchill) had launched *Hermes* at Barrow-in-Furness in 1953. Luckily the day was dry and after the ceremony, which was held in the hangar, guests and ship's company moved onto the flight deck for informal drinks before adjourning to various parts of the ship for a buffet lunch.

After workup *Hermes* moved to Rosyth and became, for the first time in the new commission, a Flagship when the flag of FOCAS (Rear-Admiral Lygo) was hoisted prior to sailing for northern waters. For the communications department it was the start of a period of two watches and heavy traffic loads which many had never experienced before. It was also to be our first operational use of the newly installed Skynet 5 SATCOM system. During 'Swift Move' the circuit was 'anchored' into the DCN through the RAF Commcen at Akrotiri in Cyprus — little did they realise how much traffic was to flow between a ship north of the Arctic circle and their Commcen nearly 3,000 miles away! During the eight days of the



Kiplin



Note our new Skynet 5 Sarcon aerial at the after end of the *Hermes* island

exercise a total of 1,324 signals were transmitted into the DCN and a further 946 sent to the ship. Circuit availability (72 per cent) was kept to a maximum, and 'wooding' to a minimum, by the excellent co-operation of the ships OOWs (no doubt with a lot of instruction from SCO2) who kept the satellite 'in view', and the ship in station, for those eight days!

On completion of the exercise the majority of the RN units detached and headed for Oslo for a four day visit. This period also allowed the Staff and ship's officers to attend the PXD at AFNORTH. For many of the communications staff, who had never been abroad before, this was their first taste of foreign money and foreign tongue. Despite the increased cost of the essentials of life (like beer and rabbits) the majority of the staff managed to get ashore once or twice during the stay.

During the visit the ship was honoured by a visit from Crown Prince Olaf and the buntings had the privilege of hoisting the Regent's personal standard during his stay onboard.

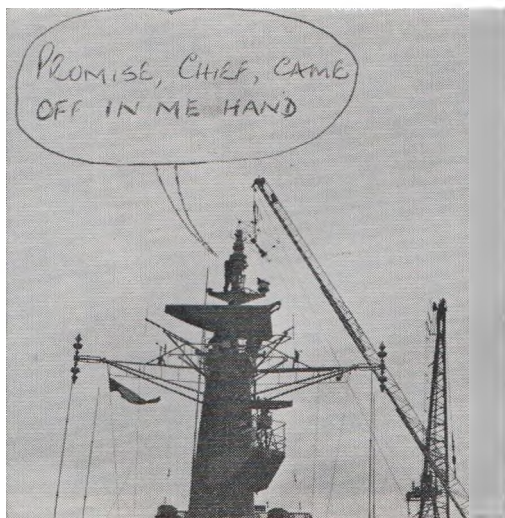
Soon Oslo Fiord was astern and the ship headed for Plymouth, via Rosyth, to give a few days leave before turning north again and changing role — to that of an LPH. By the time this appears in print we will have transported 45 Commando to some desolate training area in the Scottish Isles and learnt that the ship, and her squadrons, have an important DUAL role to play within the framework of NATO.

Before closing mention must be made of the hard work put in by RS Bennett, in his role as organiser of raffles on behalf of the welfare committee. The latest one — in aid of the British Seamen's Boys' Home at Brixham — made the profit intended and produced a FIRST prize winner when JRO Rowlett won a portable TV set. SCO2 (Lt Winkless) represented the wardroom winners and took away an electric toothbrush — the winner of a bottle of brandy would not swap with him!

There has been little time for sport of late: however SCO (Lt Cdr Wilson) and LRO I. Collins have managed to represent the ship on the rugby field on a number of occasions and JRO Butt on the soccer field.

And our final word — unfortunately we will not be able to join the Communicators at their Ball on December 4 in Portsmouth. However from all in *Hermes* have a good time and a very festive season.

## HMS JUNO



## Integrated Intrepids

by Lt Cdr S. Drake-Wilkes

This is the final edition of The Communicator in



The Communications Division



The Users and Maintainers

which it is possible to pay tribute to 661 Signal Troop (LPD). The Royal Signallers have been with *Intrepid* in varying shapes and sizes since first commissioning and they finally haul down their flag on December 12, 1973.

They have been a loyal and dedicated team who have joined in totally with their blue jacket opposite numbers ashore and afloat. They have run up the Rock (of Gibraltar) for us and all the sports teams will be lacking their skill.

We say a very reluctant farewell and wish them every success. We all hope that in the time to come they will remember such oddities as: stand easy, decks and bulkheads, force 8 gales, runs ashore and their naval oppos.

The other group of integrated personnel are our Maintainers. In the last exercise we had to guard, copy or cover some 31 circuits and in the 10 days of the exercise we had but one instance of equipment failure.

They claim to have trained the users well and the users claim to have done the same (and not only the 603rd way to break a WBA). Thank you — Maintainers.

*Intrepid* has been involved in Exercise 'Deep Furrow' — a sort of swept up 'Dawn Patrol'. We copied the major NATO broadcast, the TF broadcast and ran an MRL, the RN TG broadcast and a UK CW broadcast thus producing a grand total of 11,800 signals in, out or through.

The OXP ratings were as effective as ever and were invaluable. They are welcome to sign on for *Intrepid* any time.

Unfortunately the points raised at the end of 'Deep Furrow' were distressingly like those raised after every exercise, to wit:-

The Broadcast Control Station re-running old traffic under new numbers.

No implementation of a National Minimise.

The awesome over-precedence of signals.

Too many circuits.

Finally, *Intrepid* goes into refit in December and the Communicators scatter. We welcome Lieut Comdr Dobson as SCO until Lieut Comdr Howard joins in March.



(March 31, 1972) for the completion of the withdrawal of British Forces from Malta, the RN Commcen at Lascaris ceased to function. Our traffic was cleared by a Royal Signals Unit, which set up shop next door to the MSO, using transportable equipment. All equipment was removed from the Main Commcen and the Commcen Annexe (formerly called the NATO ANNEXE), and shipped to UK/NAPLES.

The communication staff returned to UK, the Maltese tapists, TP operators and messengers left; Miss Lillian Fitt, MBE, finally took her departure, and in so doing made the words of now ageing and nameless CCY come true, when he said 'When Miss Fitt leaves, this Commcen will close'. Many a true word . . . ! So ended another chapter in the history of Naval Communications in Malta.

There was only a very short interval between the end of the withdrawal and the beginning of the return, following the 'eleventh hour' signing of the new Agreement. During this short interval Naval Headquarters Lascaris depended on a hand message service run to RAF Luqa. As soon as sufficient RN operators returned to the Island, the 'mini' Commcen was again set up next door to the MSO using Army transportable equipment. Soon afterwards the MSO began to function with HOA(N) and LCN our two purely naval circuits.

Arrangements went ahead to establish an interim Commcen in the annexe, as the equipment became available. This gave the opportunity for the long awaited modernisation plan for the main Commcen to be put into effect. On October 24, 1972 RN Commcen Lascaris went back on the air with CW



Taper Plin

### RN COMMCCEN LASCARIS

by LRO(G) D. M. Askew

Approximately one week before the final date

ship-shore, and circuits to RAF Luqa and Commcen Malta (our outlet to UK), and B11M on test transmissions. Later on our NATO circuits were re-activated, and with B11M and MRL2 operational we became a going concern again. Working conditions in the interim Commcen are far from ideal, but progress on the modernisation of the main commcen has been so good that hopes are high for it being operational by the end of 1973.

Any who has served at Lascaris may be interested to know that the 'new' Commcen will be almost fully self-contained in the Regulating Office, Commcen Registry, rest-rooms etc will all be within the underground complex, only the MSO Store and the WE Department will remain outside. Older readers will say that the organisation has turned the full circle. It has!

It is worth noting that the old title RN Commcen Malta has lapsed and our official title is RN Commcen Lascaris. Commcen Malta is now what used to be RAF Commcen Siggiewi.

One would think that with the lift and shift, lack of equipment, and family upheaval (the vast majority of the staff are accompanied), that training and study for advancement have been almost negligible. On the contrary, from a total of 19 (LRO/RO) who have sat for their provisional examinations, 13 gained PASS and four are awaiting results at the time of writing. The Wrens have had two Passes from five candidates.

Rear-Adml D. A. Loram, MVO, is the new Commander British Forces Malta and Flag Officer Malta. Though not the first Communicator to be Flag Officer, Malta, Rear-Adml Loram is certainly the first Communicator to be CBFM.

Socially, life is good in Malta. The UK senior rates mess in St. Angelo is one of the most popular on the island, and the junior ratings Starlight Club can boast similar popularity. Communicators play no small part in the running of both. Apart from the 'mess type' of social life, watches continue to organise the various 'runs' . . . barbecues, beach-runs, and watch socials etc as the seasons dictate.



A Triplin

## HMS LEOPARD

Peace and love to all Communicators from 'TOP CAT', and our apologies for being absent from these

pages for so long. The lack of QSO is due largely to overwork and also a coke bottle shouldered department, when it's writing time.

Though an extremely social department, our opportunities so far this year on the social scene have been somewhat restricted by one workup and two fish patrols. However, next year looks a little more promising as we deploy to the Far East in February (RBVIC please note).

In conclusion I'd like to remind *Apollo* of the following ex officio conversation taken from 697D1.

DE GNIE NO MORE BICKERING OVER GEAR  
WE CAN BEAT ALL OF U PUT TOGETHER  
KILO

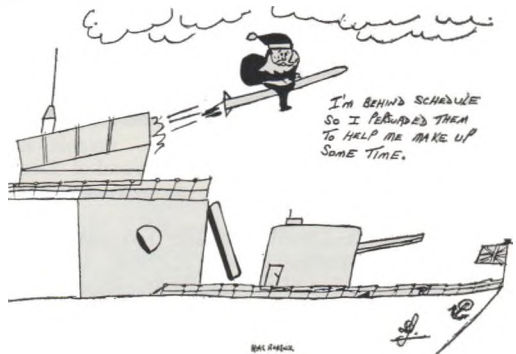
GNIE DE MTYF IF YOU'RE SUCH A  
GOOD KIDDY MATE HOW ABOUT TAKING  
UP GUARD OR GETTING RID OF A FEW OF  
OUR SIGGIES KKKKKK

DE GNIE SORRY OM GYA NOT GETTING  
US OK

WE ARE ZBZ NIL NOW WITH GEAR SNAGS  
WILL LET U KNOW ANY WAY

OK KILO

P.S. J. A. M. Strangler is alive and well and living in HMS *Leopard*.



## HMS NORFOLK

by CRS D. Greig

Anyone who has paid a recent visit to Portsmouth Dockyard would no doubt have taken a second glance at the 'New look' *Norfolk*. One could hardly fail to notice the alterations which have been made to the ship's superstructure. We have lost one of our conventional 4.5 inch turrets and gained a very fine weapon indeed in the form of the French surface to surface missile system Exocet.

Our new lines make us so readily distinguishable from other ships of our class that we are bound to cause raised eyebrows and be the object of pointed fingers for a long time to come. But naturally there is a great deal of attention focused on us indirectly. Being the first RN ship to be fitted with Exocet we have a very important task ahead of us carrying out a multitude of trials and test firings to prove the system.

## HMS/M NARWHAL

by RO2(G) T. L. Hall

Although the installation of the Exocet system headed the list of refit priorities there were many other alterations and improvements carried out throughout the ship, not least the streamlining of the dining halls and some messdecks, making life onboard a great deal more pleasant.

The Communications department is leading the field in the social world onboard with highly successful outings organised by our first class social secretary LRO 'Buster' Brown. Rumour has it the tickets for the Communicators' socials are fetching a good price on the Wardroom black market. But many of our newcomers, unable to keep up with the hectic social life, are anxiously pulling at the reins to get away from it all and spend a few weeks working-up off the Dorset coast.

We interrupt our period as guests of FOST and return to Portsmouth to give Christmas leave which we will all be looking forward to.

All that remains to be said is for me, on behalf of the staff of the *Norfolk*, to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and the best of luck in the New Year.

Dear Ed  
Reference.

A. CINC FLEET's CAV/HET 101551Z Sep. (Below this article).

1. We have onboard a Sub-Lieutenant Sam Hughes RAN (he is also a Communicator no less). He thinks he is a citizen of the Commonwealth — so do I for that matter. However it appears that CINC FLEET knows better.

2. The question is... does CINC FLEET know something we don't know? (or do we know something CINC FLEET does not know?)

Yours faithfully,  
Lieut M. J. D. FARROW  
HMS *Norfolk*

ROUTINE 101551Z SEP  
FROM CINC FLEET  
TO AIG 1106  
INFO

MOD UK ARMY SCHOSIGS  
US DAO LONDON  
SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY LONDON  
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY LONDON  
NEW ZEALAND EMBASSY LONDON



Cripplin

Having never graced this fair magazine's pages may we take the opportunity to put our oar in on behalf of this 'P Boat'.

Having been commissioned nine months our staff has now settled down to the following: Lt J. Bailey who holds the rather dubious title of TOSCO, (Torpedo officer/Comms officer) who is at present on leave keeping a date at the church, followed by a honeymoon in Majorca. Our RS, is 'Tannoy' Terry, who will be following the same road to the altar in December. The killick of the boat is 'Scoots' Rich who earned his name during action stations for driving around on the after periscope seat while the Captain pushed around the periscope manually. RO1(G) Clements, recently rejoined from *Mercury* (somewhere in Hampshire we're told) after killicks course and as a reward is now signalman and postie. RO1(G) 'Happy' Hepworth, who finally passed at his fourth attempt, and is the official *Narwhal* song writer/cheer leader, as many a sore eared landlord will confirm. Last but not least is RO2(G) Hall, affectionately known as 'Our Nobby'.

We look back on the last nine months as a succession of runs, (and hard work) fitted in between work-up phases and routine maintenance, advertising the *Narwhal's* abilities in many fields. We are now running from Guzz (SM2 means happy motoring) and have a couple of weeks running from Portland before returning to Oggie land for Crimbo leave and maintenance.

Having put fingers to typewriter I may not have achieved a lot, but it should at least boost the circulation of this 'mag' by one anyway.

## PLYMOUTH COMMEN

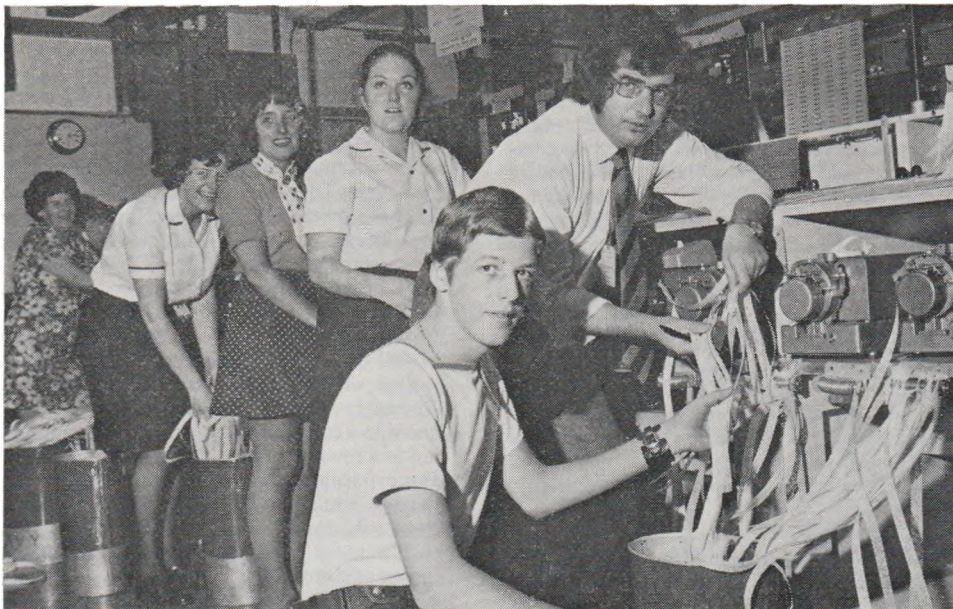
by pressed SD men

There has not been an article from this Commcen in THE COMMUNICATOR for some time. This fact, observed by SCO II, has filtered its way down to me together with instructions to get one written for the next issue.

We're a Joint Commcen here at Plymouth now, with RAF and civilians as well as RN personnel and it all seems to work smoothly after some initial teething troubles, not the least of which was three different watchbills. We also have the bastion of the RNR in the Southwest — HMS *Vivid* — located in the building and they help us out very efficiently, during major exercises and other hectic times.

Most of our customers on LCN these days seem to be RFAs, RMA's vessels and minesweepers and we are kept busy by them — who said morse was dead? At the moment the NRR which is where LCN and Hoa terminate is being virtually rebuilt around us. So if the operator on LCN gives you sea going blokes QRM IMI after you've just passed three pages of PL,

'What's it matter as long as you TARE them up'



Joint Service and Civilian Staff MHQ Plymouth TRC during exercise 'Quick Shave' Sept 1973  
From right to left: RO2 Cordell (*Ark Royal*), Mr Nolan (STPO), SACW Jones, Mrs Rooker (STPO), WREN Little, Mrs Davy (STPO)

it's because the QRM is being caused by hammers, chisels, saws and electric drills, and his morse is a bit dodgy because a dockie's size 10 boot has just trodden on his morse hand whilst he (the dockie) standing on the bay is threading new wiring in and around and above our intrepid operator. It'll be great when it's finished.

Below the NRR is the TRC, where all the work is done, so they say. We have circuits to various naval and RAF authorities, plus harbour UHF RATT and HF RATT Ship-Shore. The latter circuit employs a piece of hardware usually associated with older frigates. To communicate between the NRR and the TRC a good old brass voice pipe is used. It has been noticed that people on joining always give an odd look to the fellow halfway down the TRC apparently screaming at the wall 'Up top, Golf Lima ZBZ5 QRV.' We handle a fair volume of traffic here, most of it correctly, though we do have our moments. For purposes of illustration only, a certain bleary eyed Wren one forenoon discovered that the little piece of tape which she kept sending into TARE was not in fact a Tare Check, but a ZFX report which had originally come from TARE. Such is life and such occurrences, to be honest, are remarkably rare.

Staffwise, our SCO is Lieut-Comdr K. Schofield, SCO II, Lieut W. Stacey (ex sea rider at Portland) and Mr Newton is the command FCRS, who is only too willing to sort out any snags you may have comm-wise. As for the rest of us, well, we've all been here so long that you probably won't remember us anyway so

I won't ask you to cast your memories back that far. However one who may be remembered is Lieut Cobb (Whitehall types will know him). He has just retired after many years (I won't say how many) service in the Branch and we take this opportunity of wishing him a long and happy retirement.

## HMS SCYLLA

by CRS Puttick

Since the last article much water has passed under ship's hull, with the communicators being well occupied with exercises of all sorts. The fleet form 10 returns should look quite impressive for this quarter, though some of the returns called for are still out of the ordinary for modern up-to-date communications.

The article in the last COMMUNICATOR by FCRS Alderson, is still firmly fixed in the mind of many Communicators onboard, and I really believe that job satisfaction is hard to achieve with modern equipment, and modern ideas are hard to come by to keep the juniors alert with sights on a future within the Communications Branch.

*Scylla* has enjoyed the hospitality of the Scots with a visit to Aberdeen, closely followed by the Welsh when we went to Cardiff and finally the Germans at Flensburg. All were very much appreciated by the staff after the two and three watches they had been keeping. In Flensburg a visit to the German Signal School was in order and 19 of the staff managed to

tour. The hospitality was overwhelming and we are just hoping that *Mercury* will catch on to the German stand easy wet of tea, which consisted of half tea and half rum! (what a way to go). Lunch time was hosted by the CPOs mess, to which CRS Puttick, LROs Harfield and Potter returned in the evening to exchange plaques.

For the future, we hope to be guest of the English, when we look forward to visits to Portsmouth (our only weekend trip to that port in the commission) and the Pool of London. Commcen Whitehall is included in one of our many visits during our stay in London. See you all.

## UKCOMMCELL SINGAPORE

by Dabs

At last an article from Singapore, apart from the ANZUK Commcen, there is tucked away in the old CINC Printers Office, a small naval communications staff looking after the UKCOMMCELL. Our service to the fleet consists purely of MRL7A. We also offer to visiting ships one small incinerator, our hospitality and any help we can on the local scene, and very different it is to a few years ago.

Our staff is small. The OIC is Lieut Carter (also ANZUK TRC), RS Barlow, LRO(T) Birnie, ROs (W) Jenkins, (G) Edwards, (T) Seaman and on the maintenance side REMN Collins and REM1 Boslem. Our watchkeeping system is four watches breaking into three for leaves, sickness etc.

We are self-contained unit but depend upon our friends in ANZUK for system engineering and guidance from time to time. Our main purpose in being here is to look after the UK national traffic for all three Services on the island and for RN ships in harbour, not forgetting our job as a contingency cell, always ready for any emergency that may arise.

Sportswise we rely purely on 'guesting' for other teams, as a unit we couldn't even put out a seven-a-side team and keep up the watches. Most of us have guested for 9th Sigs or Woodlands Hospital (ex Terror sickbay) from time to time. Some of the staff have also made the golf club their second home. So when you arrive in Singapore, look us up, and if you don't we'll find you and help to get rid of your last few cans of English ale, before the dreaded Tiger worms its way into your fingers.

## HMS TENACITY

by LRO(G) M. A. Rackham

Well, here we are again, the fast patrolmen of the 'fighting T'. At present alongside (again), at Lochinvar doing a BMP and believe it or not, second summer leave has just commenced (October), well I suppose that's life in a pair of No 8's.

Since our last article we have done the normal UK patrols, with a visit to Concarneau in France. Most of our time has been spent on Channel patrol, which seems to be the most popular patrol run-ashore wise, especially in the summer months.

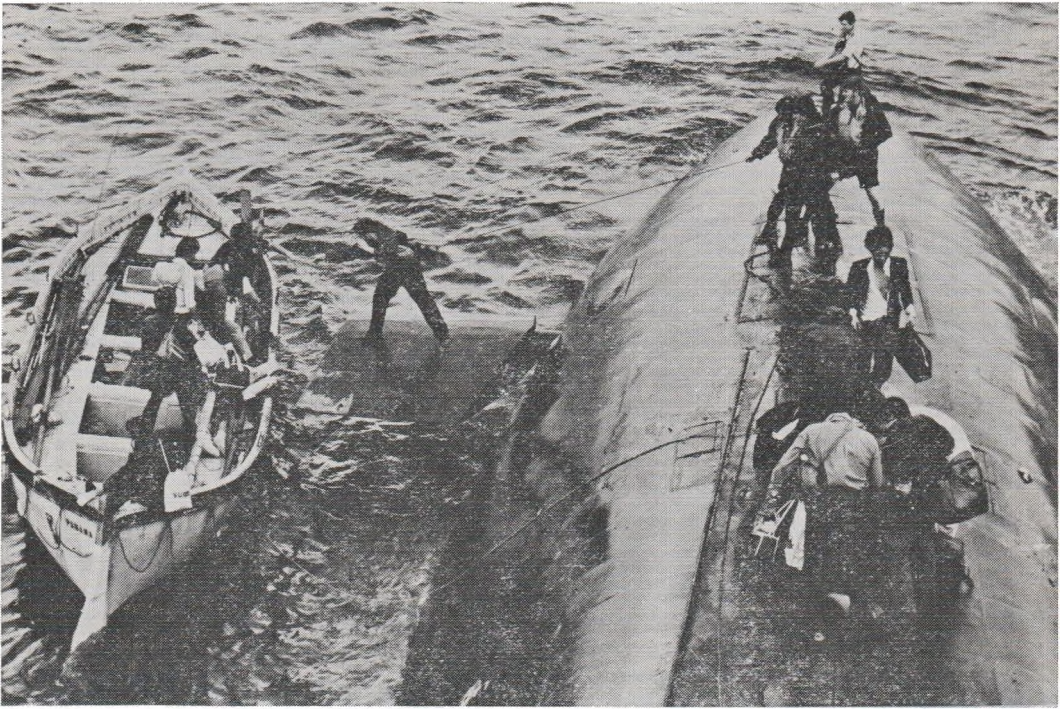
On a recent patrol in the North Sea, we pulled into



Blyth for two days (should have been), where we attended the ceremony of the grand opening/commissioning of the Ashington Sea Cadet Corps, who are now 'TS Tenacity', the booze and the big eats ran freely all the afternoon followed by a reception in the local RNA in the evening. Well I can tell you it was no joke trying to get up for the 0700 routine the next morning. Thought with it being weekend, that Rosyth would give me a QRU QRX etc . . . but alas no . . . up comes Joe 90 on the Highburton with an oscar, saying they had just spotted five Belgians having a fine time of it, poaching inside the limit . . . could we get down there ASAP??? Well we got away in about 30 mins straight out into Harry Ruffers, cor . . . had a head like WZ, self cancelling . . . shortly we passed 'Higgy B' on way back up, with a Belgian in custody. Well by the time we arrived on the scene, the rest had all scarpred, obviously having been given the buzz on R/T by the one 'Higgy B' trapped . . . never mind we tried, ha.

Ron Sharples the other half of the sparkery left us in Brixham to go home for a couple of weeks and get 'hitched', and I don't think his newly wed went much on it, when he suggested aborting the wedding reception, deciding he wanted a £24 electric bug key. Never mind Ron, you will probably get one in your crimbo stocking??? During Ron's absence, FOST Commcen very kindly gave me the invaluable loan of LRO(G) Dave Joseph (works part-time in the Woods Rum bottling plant), who I think had quite an enjoyable trip, until he received an official envelope from FOST Reg RS with his next draft enclosed. What sweeper have they got lined up for me thinks Joe? . . . oh no !&'?'w'&!! (now then Joe, language), I've got the *Ark Royal*, ha ha ha ha no, sorry Joe I don't think I want to swop with you.

Well after our next patrol, we are off back to Vospers at Pompey for a month to have a few mods done down the donk shop, then it's back out on patrol about Jan 3. Before saying cheerio, we would like to say a big TKS to all the CCN stations (not forgetting MSO Lochinvar) for the good services/comms during this year, a happy dit and a merry new dah to you all . . . By the way, and we are not knocking the Signal School instructors, but what size boxing gloves do the new style sparkers get issued with??? feel sure we must of worked a few on recent patrols . . . bring back the key!!!



'Dreadnought' carrying out salvage operations in the Malacca Straits

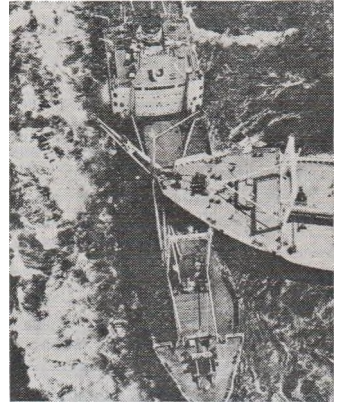
## HMS TIGER

Anon

*Tiger* in Singapore? 'Tiger Tops' — it is too much of a coincidence, someone must have planned it! *Tiger* (HMS) is resting on her haunches and catching up with some maintenance prior to starting out on the homeward leg of the present deployment. It is nice to find the natives are still friendly and that it is still possible to have a reasonable run ashore despite Bugis Street being knee-deep in Kai Tais staring at the tourists.

Our Sea King helicopters keep proving their versatility in so many ways for tasks in war and peace. An interesting operation was a salvage job that *Tiger* did on a 10,000 ton cargo ship *MV Carnation* which had been in collision with a larger sized tanker in the Malacca Straits. The tanker's bows had ploughed about a 20 feet furrow into *Carnation* just for'd of her port beam. The problem was to cut the tanker clear whilst trying to ensure the *Carnation* did not disappear as a bubble.

*Dreadnought* who was first on the scene, having been detached, recovered the crew of *Carnation* who had decided to a man that the ship should be abandoned leaving only the Master and the First Mate onboard. *Tiger's* Sea Kings then moved in, taking an advance party of experts to survey the job and following them up with more men and material. The



result was that by the time *Tiger* arrived on the scene some hours later it was fairly clear what had to be done. A fine piece of salvage work resulted in the tanker pulling herself clear leaving *MV Carnation* not only afloat but also able to steam. By this time *Carnation* was *Tiger's* salvage prize and a steaming crew including two sparkers (one the CRS(W) would you believe — no one else could be spared) steamed her into Singapore in company with *Tiger*. It should be worth about a fiver for many and something more for the salvage and steaming crew. The cargo was not what the sailor called it, it was fertiliser.

Another use found for our helicopters was for what must rate as one of the strangest bits of QSP'ing ever. A Norwegian tanker flashed us up to say that

her main radio transmitter was out of action and would we please relay a couple of telegrams for her to the owners. A Sea King just happened to be on a training flight and so it was sent to collect the telegrams plus the money plus a drinkable drop of commission. So it was Sea King 142/MMWS QSp via etcetera.

In the words of our current top tune, We're coming home for Christmas, perhaps we shall be seeing some of you.

Good luck and best wishes to you all from  
The Tigers (grr grrr)

### TAMAR TACTICIANS

by RO2(T) Botterill

Here is a photo of us all in Hong Kong,  
As you can see we're a mixture of the short and long,  
Some of us are big enough to stand on our feet,  
But our pet 'dwarfs' have to stand on their seats,  
Chief Wilesmith tries to keep us working flat out,  
While some hit the bottle and just 'pass out',  
Exercises, Navcomexs and Biffers we do quite often,  
We all say we don't really want them,  
Visiting ships come to see us and depart,  
But old *Rhyl* had a few false starts,  
Typhoons and Tropical Storms we've had in plenty,  
Notably Opal, Dot and Patsy,  
They all brought wind and stacks of rain,  
But we're not worried as the sun's shining again,  
Hoolies and Banyans are common in Hong Kong,  
For some of us we'll be home before long,  
This is all we have to say,  
Maybe you'll hear from us next May.

(By Editor — Sorry no room for photo)

### 'PUSHING THE BOAT OUT'

A silver replica of the Nelson Jolly Boat — the original is in the Nelson Collection at Lloyd's — was recently presented to Sir Martin Wilkinson, chairman of the Stock Exchange, to mark the opening of the new Stock Exchange buildings.

Sir Henry Mance, Chairman of Lloyd's, in presenting the boat, explained: 'The idea was for the port and sherry decanters which sat in the jolly boat to be circulated round the mess table until empty and the officer in front of whom it finished up in that state had to pay the bill — hence the expression "pushing the boat out".'

(By courtesy of Lloyd's List)



## OPERATORS:

## LEAVING THE NAVY SOON . . . ?

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**GOODBYE BILL BUGG, MBE**  
by the Editor



Mr W. C. H. Bugg, MBE, HMS *Mercury's* CB Officer, has retired after 49½ years' service.

CYS BUGG was discharged from the Royal Navy as a pensioner on November 9, 1947 and, 3 days later, joined *Mercury* as the Training Commander's Clerk, with the rank of Temporary Clerk Grade III. Six months later he was made redundant but escaped the axe by filling the billet of another temporary clerk who had given notice to quit.

Five months later he was again declared redundant and became a boilerman after taking a Board for Clerical Officer. In January 1949, after a successful Board, he was promoted to Clerical Officer and was reinstated in the Pack Office. After six years there he moved in turn to the CB Office, Training Plans Office and finally back to the CB Office.

In early 1969, CRS Alderson, then President of the CPOs' Mess, unearthed a proposal to form an Association of Communication Chiefs, and invited certain locally retired Chiefs to form a steering Committee which also included himself and his Mess Secretary. A meeting was held in a private office in Purbrook in April 1969 and Bill Bugg was appointed founder Hon Secretary. His earlier efforts resulted in official (MOD) recognition of the Association and, by harnessing the persuasive powers of Admiral of the Fleet the Earl Mountbatten and others, he enlisted Vice-Admiral Sir John Parker, KBE, DSC as President of the Association and CSS (then Captain Sir Peter Anson, Bt) as Vice-President. Each year he has produced two Newsletters singlehanded — and has two stubby forefingers to prove it! — and in conjunction with the Mess Committee has staged five reunions, which involve considerable planning and hard work.

Due in no small measure to Bill's industry, the Association has grown from an idea at a Mess Party to a Membership approaching 350 which embraces almost every known ex-Communication Chief and many Active-Service Officers, Fleet Chief Petty Officers and Chief Petty Officers.

On his retirement in November 1973 he has had to relinquish the Secretary's chair, but on 'earthing quills' he continues as a Member of the Committee on which his past experience with the RNCCA and, incidentally, the RNA, will be invaluable for many years.

All Communicators will, no doubt, join me in wishing Bill Bugg all the very best in the future, a happy Retirement, and the hope that we will be meeting him again at many Reunions to come.

**RN COMMUNICATION CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION**  
y CRS W. C. Tinkler

Over 200 members attended the fifth reunion in HMS *Mercury* on Saturday, September 8. This was the highest attendance so far and included members who had travelled from the North of Scotland, Yorkshire, North Wales and even the West Country.

The occasion marked the retirement of our founder Secretary, Bill Bugg, whose work for the Association was matched only by his efforts as a Chief Yeoman and Civil Servant. It occurs to me that he was awarded the RVM for the former, an MBE for the latter and a quick whip-round for the price of a pint by the Association! Well done, Bill, and a happy retirement.

We are grateful for the hard work and the facilities provided by the parent Mess. Without them no reunion could be successful, and the efforts of representatives on the Committee of the Association are very highly appreciated too.

We would like to take this opportunity of wishing all Communicators — and those in Commcen Whitehall — a happy and peaceful Christmas, and a pay rise in 1974.

**Mr. A. G. E. PHILLIPS**

You will be sorry to hear that Mr Phillips, Chief Storekeeper with the Married Quarters, passed away on Saturday 24, 1973.

Mr Phillips joined us after being discharged from the Army in 1945, and was employed as a Stores Assistant in the Naval Stores. In 1953 he was promoted to Leading Storekeeper and at about that time was employed part-time on Married Quarters work. In 1957 he was promoted to Chief Storekeeper and then employed permanently on Married Quarters duties.

It is hard to say how many families passed through Married Quarters during Mr Phillips employment but many will recall how popular and helpful he was. The wives of both officers and ratings will remember his friendly approach and his wonderful way with children.

Mr Phillips was also the Secretary of the HMS *Mercury* branch of the Hospital Savings Association which is a Nation-wide scheme whereby Civil Servants can obtain numerous medical benefits.

We offer our condolences to Mrs Phillips on her great loss.

# GOING THE ROUNDS IN MERCURY

Training Commander and 2i/c — Commander H. Dickins  
Support Commander — Commander R. C. Smith  
Commander Training Support — Instructor Commander P. Jewell

## Staff

CBO	Mr E. Cardy	K1	Lt-Cdr W. M. Caswell	SOTO	Lt-Cdr. T. S. R. Crozier
G1	Lt-Cdr N. J. Allcock	MACO	Lt-Cdr P. A. Lennon	T1	Lt-Cdr F. Rivers
GM1	Lieut T. Pratt	O1	Lt-Cdr B. Johnston, CF	TPO	Lieut J. J. Colmer
IDO	Mr S. J. Higgs	SA(FT)	Lieut C. S. Collins	TRO	Mr H. F. Lehmann
		SORT	Lt-Cdr D. C. Allen	W1	Lt-Cdr S. Jackson
		SOTAC	Lt-Cdr B. Burns		

## FLEET CHIEF OFFICERS' AND CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS MESS

*President:* T. C. W. Hankey, FCCY

*Vice-President:* B. H. Fouracre, FCCY

*Mess Manager:* B. Adlam, CME(M)

*Mess Secretary:* J. Hilder, CRS

*Mess Committee:* J. Leppard, FCRS(W)

J. Howieson, CRS(W)

*Entertainments Committee:* P. Shuttlewood, CRS;

J. G. T. Doherty, S/Sgt(YOS); J. Balldock, CCY;

B. M. Madden, CCY

Before putting pen to paper, I spent some time reading through past editions of THE COMMUNICATOR, and with respect to Messrs Alderson and Tinkler I find that some things never change; we are late producing this article once again, and John Hilder is still the Mess Sec/Treasurer. There is hope for the Branch yet.

First the Social scene. In addition to our regular social evenings three main functions have been held since we last went to print; the combined Mess/RNCCA Social and Cocktail party, the RNCCA reunion, and the Mess Official Cocktail Party. The Mess/RNCCA party was the first of its kind to be held in the Mess and is, judging by the favourable reaction from ex and serving Communicators and their wives, an event that should be repeated.

Another first was a Quiz/Social evening with our khaki colleagues from Blandford. A Challenge Cup, suitably inscribed, was presented by the Mess in the hope that this, like the Sea Dad's Trophy, will become an annual event. Being the hosts this time we were pleased to see Blandford win. It was not a fiddle, except that our questions were from the Encyclopaedia Britannica and theirs were from Noddy's Annual.

The Mess Dinner has become a popular occasion over the past years. By the time this article appears in print we shall have our own set of table silver which as far as I know makes us the first Naval Senior Ratings, Mess to have done so. Now that the 'working' Mess President has been replaced by the Mess Manager the occupants of the Presidential chair seem to change with alarming rapidity. I shall be off to join John Eilbeck on the mighty 'A' in the near future

but before I do I would like to say how much I have enjoyed my time as President, and to thank the Mess and Entertainments Committees, who have made my job an easy one.

We hear a lot of talk these days about the 'Nine to five' syndrome and the indifferent attitude of modern society. The success of any organisation must stand or fall on the willingness of all members to involve themselves as much as possible. It is to the credit of past and present Mess Members that our Mess is held in such high regard by all those Service and Civilian personnel who have come into contact with us.

## THE PETTY OFFICERS' MESS UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

*Written by:* RS Edwards.

*Re-written by:* RS Girling.

*Edited by:* RS Hick.

*Re-edited by:* RS Leaman.

*Verbal criticisms by:* RS Day.

*President:* RS Fox.

*Mess Manager:* CY Durrant

*Secretary:* CY Boyes.

*Social Secretary:* CY Prince.

*Committee:*

RS Lee, RS Sanderson, RS Evans

*Entertainments:*

CY Goldsmith, RS Jones K., POCK Froggatt.

Greetings to all Senior Communication Rates, friends, mess members past and present wherever you may be. This is our last article before proceeding to Portland for a work up, then to Hong Kong.

But seriously we are still here thinking about all you poor lost souls out on the 'oggin, hearing tales of woe from them that comes up and tells us what it is like out there, or commiserating with them that has yet to go down to the 'oggin in ships. The College of Knowledge still functions like a production line at Fords, with the difference that we cannot go on strike. (Not that we would if we got the chance.)

Like all good communicational enclaves at home and abroad, it struck us that we had not seen our names in print in the hallowed pages for some time past, so here goes.

The mess structure has changed somewhat in recent

months, due to certain requirements of the organisation which hopes in time to combine the Senior Rates messes. Fred Fox has taken over as President from Ron Goldsworthy who is now at Whitehall. We would like to take this opportunity of congratulating both of them in getting their names mentioned in despatches, so it looks like we will be needing another new President before long. The Vice President's job, which was held by Terry Fisher (now at Southwick) has been allowed to lapse, and his duties now shared between the President and the Mess Manager. The President chairs the mess, while retaining an instructional billet, day to day running is controlled by the Mess Manager. The Committee consists of five members (Secretary, Mess Manager and three), all except the Mess Manager are 'democratically' elected.

Talking of mess organisation I think it is only fair to mention the hardest working of the mess officials, the Entertainments Committee. The committee is led by RS(CY) Dave Prince and all are volunteers and hence have no status in the running of the mess. In fact, any mess member is quite welcome to organise a night out off his own bat. Examples of this have been a Brewery run to Gales at Horndean (everyone said that the beer was not too bad, but could not recall the journey back to the mess). A visit from Isleworth Social Club in West London was not so well supported as expected, as it clashed with the England v Poland night, however unlike England we do get another go on their ground. Also a number of car treasure hunts were held, the last one was won by a blue job whom someone inadvertently invited.

This term so far we have had a cheese and wine party where the cheese stayed more or less intact but the wine did not stand a snowball's chance in hell. A visit to the Sergeant's Mess at one of the many MOD army places at Bordon. (We went to the wrong place twice and nearly ended up at a regimental dinner). It could not have been a bad night, because half the mess members missed the coach back, and ended up paying £6 a knock for the taxi fare.

Our end of term dance this Christmas will be held in the Centre Hotel Southsea on December 20. As usual all Communications Senior Rates are welcome, and if it is half as good as last year's happening it will be well worth going to. If you are in the Portsmouth area you are quite welcome to any of the mess functions. Just ring the Mess Manager on extension 228 and he will be glad to let you know of any forthcoming 'attractions'.

With particular emphasis on indoor sport, I would like to thank the never ending efforts of our dart team. Though success in the league has evaded them (deserted might be a better word), they have an unbroken record where the play off for the barrel is concerned. I understand they had some difficulty towards the end maintaining their losing streak, and were in some danger of missing the wooden spoon. Then there was the time that our quiz team gave the Chief's mess a drubbing, we are not saying we are

clever, but Magnus Magnusson was severely tempted to take over our coaching!

Well readers that's it, all it leaves me to say, on behalf of the Petty Officer Mess, is to wish you a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

## KELLY SQUADRON

### Ganges/Raleigh

For those who may be confused by the continued survival of HMS *Ganges*, here is a brief resume of the situation. The intention is that HMS *Raleigh* will eventually be taking all New Entries of all branches for Part I, and some branches (who do not have their own Part II establishments) for Part II as well. To do this, a major rebuilding programme is going on at Torpoint. Meanwhile, and until the rebuilding is complete in about early 1975, HMS *Ganges* is taking all Communicators, EM and some others for Part I; of course the 16½ school leaving age is now with us. After the transfer back to *Raleigh* in 1975(?) HMS *Ganges* will close down completely.

That is the plan, although it is difficult to envisage a Navy without Shotley. So at the moment we are receiving all new entries for Part II training from *Ganges*, and the last of the old 15½ entries is on course here now.

### Goodbye to K1 and K6

At the beginning of next term we will lose Lieutenant Commander W. M. Caswell and welcome Lieutenant Commander S. Drake-Wilkes as his successor. We also say goodbye in December this year to FCCY T. Hankey who goes off to join HMS *Ark Royal*, where no doubt he will be welcomed by a number of ex-Kellys.

### Sports Report

Once again this term, the Squadron has been well represented in all *Mercury* sports teams. At present there are no fewer than 12 Kellys in both 1st and 2nd



Presentation of a lifebuoy from HMS 'Kelly'. Presented by Mr A. Wilkins, secretary of HMS 'Kelly' Reunion Association to Lieutenant Commander W. M. Caswell on Open Day

XI football teams. Four of these, RO3 Stange, RO3 Pidgeon, JRO Purdy and JRO Howarth have also been selected for the Navy Youth Squad.

In the rugby world we have had 31 Kellys at sometime in both establishment teams. Two of these, RO3 Winn and JRO Morris have played for the Navy under 19 team and RO3 Dent has also played for the United Services second team.

September 20 saw the Squadron's annual cross country championships. Despite a wet course a good race was held with JRO Powell winning, RO3 Broomfield in second place and JRO Balch third. The team prize went to A8 class.

A week later was *Mercury's* cross country championships. Each Division entered at least one team and even the old men of the Squadron, the instructors, were on the startling line. We did not attain remarkable individual results, but the first three team placings went to Glamorgan A, Fife A, and Antrim A teams respectively.

For the football fanatics there have been three trips to Wembley this term to watch England play Austria, Poland and Italy. The trips were a great success although there were a few long faces in the Squadron after the Poland match!!

#### Games Room

In preparation for the long winter months, Kelly Squadron have taken over the hut 'next door to Chippy' and converted it into a games room.

The facilities available to date are table tennis, darts, bar skittles, table football and various indoor games. A billiards table is being purchased at the time of going to press. There is also a radio, and with a minimal amount of supervision, squadron members are left very much to 'do their own thing'.

#### Ceremonial

Kellys have been to the fore again this term in providing parties for various Ceremonial duties, the most outstanding being 18 to form part of the Street Lining Party for HRH Princess Anne's wedding on November 14. Other duties included the Remembrance Day Service at the Cenotaph, Whitehall and the Guildhall, Portsmouth and a Memorial Service



Kelly Squadron Mini-Bus

for Admiral Sir Peter Reid at St Martins-in-the-Field.

In December the Squadron provides a Street Lining Party for President Mobuto of Zaire (Congo), so we should be pretty expert by now!

#### Loan Draft HMS Antrim

During September, a party of 21 off coursemen from the 42 Series, accompanied by Instructor Lt Cox and RS(W) Lambert, flew from Brize Norton to Cape Town where they joined HMS *Antrim* on a loan draft.

They spent two days at Simonstown and then heading in a northerly direction made their way to Freetown. En route the *Antrim* replenished with RFA *Dewdale*. This was rather a unique RAS because at the time the *Dewdale* was broken down!

After a brief stop of four hours in Freetown, it was back to sea again for a short trip up to Gibraltar. Here everyone who wanted to managed a run ashore for 'rabbits' or to sample the local brew.

By the time they arrived back in Portsmouth the party were a lot wiser about sea going life. Throughout the trip they had all spent one week in the communication department, one week doing communal duties and one week of seaman's duties.

As with drafts of this type before, everyone agreed it was a most enjoyable and worthwhile trip.

At the time of going to print, a further 60 will be in HM Ships *Tiger*, *Devonshire*, *Fearless* and *Rhyl*. It is also hoped that another 12 will winter in the West Indies during January and February onboard HMS *Bulwark*.

All these loan drafts are helping to widen the experience of our future Communicators, while keeping them gainfully occupied during the wait for the FIRST SHIP! KELLY SQUADRON is now benefiting/suffering from the good recruiting throughout 1972/73 and it is estimated that in February there will be nearly 600 in the Squadron. This does, therefore, make it a little longer before going off to sea on completion of course, but this is what the loan draft effort is intended to correct.

#### WINTER CROSSWORD SOLUTION

##### Across

1. Merryman
5. Gnomes
9. Gardener
10. Hobnob
11. And arise, arise
14. Tosed
15. Ennui
16. Swale
17. Refit
20. Quoth
22. Christmas card
24. Isohel
25. Distance
26. Nodose
27. Crackers

##### Down

1. Magi
2. Rereads
3. Yielded
4. An earthworm
6. Neonate
7. Mansion
8. Sable night
12. Slalom skier
13. Attraction
18. Firwood
19. Tassels
20. Quartic
21. Ordinee
23. Lens

# NOT AS A GENERAL RULE

by the Editor

The tropical sun beat down upon the snug naval radio station tucked away in the corner of a far-flung outpost of the British Empire. 'Trouble is, it wasn't flung far enough!' ejaculated the Chief as he lowered his torso into the deck-chair on the veranda for the 'post-tot' nap. His few minutes' 'think of home', however, were soon shattered by the shrill ringing of the telephone. With a long sigh, he reached for the instrument which, as usual, poured out the same old story 'Number one transmitter fallen over, Chief.'

With a muttered grunt of resignation at the forfeiture of his doze, the Chief plodded through the burning desert sand in the direction of the transmitting station. Suddenly he halted, . . . Yes, he would have a nap after all, for hadn't he at last got an assistant? Only that very morning a radio mechanic from Wales, Dai Poll, had arrived from the UK. He was one of the first radio mechs and the Chief's chest swelled with pride as he realised that *he* was one of the lucky Chiefs to whom the powers-that-be had sent someone to help with the many technical problems that arise.

He arrived at the transmitting station, where, sure enough, the Welsh wizard was waiting! The Chief dived into the 'innards' of the transmitter and removed a large resistor. 'Here, measure this will you? . . . should be five thousand ohms.' Away dashed the new arrival. He returned in a few minutes, panting, and his face beaming at the success of his first mission.

'Well', snapped the Chief.

'Exactly five and a quarter inches,' replied the new broom!

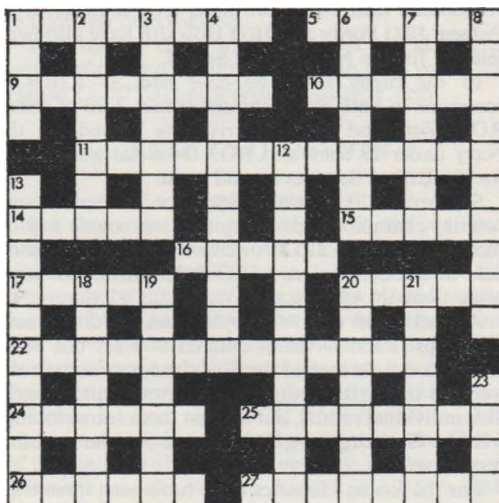
## WINTER CROSSWORD

by Ann Jewell

### CLUES

#### Across

1. Don't be mean about my backward kings—be a happy chap! (8)
5. Sing me song number one about the sprites. (6)
9. Enraged the queen when he painted the white rose red. (8)
10. A rustic head at a venture. (6)
11. 'At the round earth's imagined corners, blow Your trumpets, Angels, \_\_\_\_\_,' (John Donne) (3, 5, 5)
14. Do set it correctly, then it can be carded. (5)
15. Boredom is due to the nun, shortly, that is. (5)
16. Do they burn off in Wales? (5)
17. Light a fire with little time to repair and renew. (5)
20. "'Old woman, old woman, old woman," \_\_\_\_\_ I.' (5)
22. He crams charts I'd muddle for this token. (9, 4)



24. A confused Greek sun indicates equal amounts of it. (6)
25. The end is acted without Edward after the interval. (8)
26. Knotty ones do. (6)
27. Crazy biscuits? (8)

#### Down

1. Each trauma gives an indication of wise men. (4)
2. The reds are more easily recognised as one studies them again. (7)
3. He eyed lid after lid but gave up. (7)
4. Another warm mixture in the soil. (2, 9)
6. Switch one on at eleven and find one newly born. (7)
7. There are no mains connected here. (7)
8. 'Care-charmer Sleep, son of the \_\_\_\_\_, Brother to Death, in silent darkness born:' (Samuel Daniel) (5, 5)
12. Lark about in slime so? Not this skilled athlete. (6, 5)
13. Put it on a cart to take nothing away from its allure. (10)
18. Possibly what your Christmas tree is made of. (7)
19. The lass set the book-marks. (7)
20. Mathematically speaking, two pints in charge. (7)
21. Find the sword in eerie surroundings—and the young minister. (7)
23. This will ensure you see. (4)

(Solution on page 297)

# THE WRNS

By members of LWA3 Course

By Wren Linda Devereux

Why do girls join? I have been asked that question many times and have yet to come up with a good answer.

If you have worked in civvy street for any length of time before joining, you will find that it is a totally different world from anything you expected. You learn a new way of life and must conform to other people's standards whilst not forgetting or forsaking your own. No longer can you think that you are going to do something and it doesn't matter about the next person. You are no longer alone in a crowd — you have become part of that crowd.

You are taught how to do a job and when you leave your training establishment should feel able to perform your duties properly. I know that nine times out of 10 this just isn't so as your male counterparts will consider you totally incapable of carrying out even the most menial tasks adequately, but this attitude soon passes if you prove that you are a capable and responsible person.

It can be a disadvantage to join straight from school as it has been said that you go from one institution to another and after a short time might regret it. I think it is wise to wait a few months after leaving school before applying to join the WRNS. First find a civilian job to learn how to cope with everyday problems like the rush hour and a grumpy boss whose bad temper lasts from 9 o'clock Monday morning until 5 o'clock Friday night.

Learn how to cope with the problems this world can throw at you and then perhaps instead of just taking from, you can offer something to, the WRNS and the Navy.



Wren Linda Devereux of LWA course No 3



Wren Lorraine Newell of LWA course No 3

## RNAS YEOVILTON

By Wren Lorraine Newell

Whenever one mentions a draft to Yeovilton, the usual reaction is 'that place, how unfortunate.' But to me it's not just the actual unit that makes a draft; the location and activities matter as much, surely.

Yeovilton is in a lovely part of the country. To the south lies the Dorset coast, yielding some very nice, peace-loving bays, as well as places like Swanage, Weymouth and Poole. To the north-west is Exmoor, wild and very beautiful, leading down to the coast, more rugged than the south, and not very nice for swimming, as the Bristol Channel is very dirty. But further west, where the Channel meets the Atlantic, are the surfing beaches of North Devon, Woolacombe and Westward Ho! It is all not so very far away. Other places worth visiting in Somerset are the Cheddar Gorge, Bath and Glastonbury, where Jesus was supposed to have lived, or so the saying goes. For night life, Bristol is less than 40 miles away.

The West Country is full of traditions and old customs, annual fairs, 'Divile Flunking' competitions, and of course 'market days', when the pubs stay open all day.

For one who likes folk-music, there are lots of clubs around, where you can meet the locals and really have a good time.

Of course, the one big draw-back is transport, and without a car, it really is awkward and expensive to get anywhere. A good idea is for a group of Wrens to buy a car between them, which is what my class did in training at *Mercury*, and really got about and saw Hampshire, and had some good fun.



Leading Wren Lynn Berry of LWA course No 3 'The Island of Sand and Sun' attending a sale of Persian rugs, Mauritius

### THE ISLAND OF SAND AND SUN

By L/Wren Lynn Berry

I served in Mauritius for almost 21 months and it will always be a place I will remember. Most Service personnel who go to Mauritius are always in a hurry to get back to the UK and the 'swinging life,' but I bet within a couple of months they wish they were back amongst the sun and the sand. I know, because I was one of those people.

Mauritius is a very poverty stricken island and it is not a very nice sight to see the locals walking about in rags and living in huts they build themselves, or to see the animals dying on the roadsides ridden with disease.

Once out of the central part of the island, the coast gives way to miles of beautiful beaches and hours of entertainment. It is a great experience to go skiing and ride on top of the water, to go snorkling in the early hours of the morning and catch yourself some beautiful shells. If you are more adventurous, you can join the diving club, and after passing a few tests can delve into the deeper waters, and its beautiful marine world. If you are not at all energetic, you can just collapse on the beach.

To work in HMS *Mauritius* itself is not as good as it could be. The Commcen is a very quiet place, and there is little work to do, but once off watch, HMS provides excellent facilities.

It has its own theatre, which shows films just about every night of the week, and all for the price of 7½p,

# Prize this month 1x£50,000

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You might win £25, or £50, or £100, or £250, or £500, or £1,000, or £5,000, or £25,000, or you might even win £50,000. It all adds up to nearly £4,000,000 shared between around 95,000 Premium Bond Prizewinners this month. And the more you have, the more chances you have of winning. Buy them at Post Offices, F.P.O.s, or Banks. Or write to: The Secretary, HM Forces Savings Committee, Block B, Government Buildings, London Road, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 4PX.





**PO WREN Carol Gibbon seated bottom row extreme left**

them 49 points to 21.

Thursday we opened the Championships in the morning with our match against Group 2, the Air and Scotland Command. It was a really good game with the teams appearing to be the same standard, the final result did not justify the standard of Group 2 — 41 goals to 16, to Group 1. Unfortunately according to the draw we were the unlucky team to have to play both our matches in one day and we went on that afternoon to play Group 3 — Plymouth and Royal Marines. Again we played to the full by which time the girls were working well as a team and we succeeded with our second victory 38—9. The Championships at this point were decided but Group 2 still had to play Group 3 to decide the runners up. That was played on the Friday afternoon followed by the presentation of the cup to Group 1 for the fifth year running, by the Commodore of the Royal Naval Barracks. Unfortunately being Friday afternoon the games were not very well supported by spectators but those who did attend plus all the teams, enjoyed a very good tea afterwards in Neptune block provided by the capable staff of the WRENS Quarters.

From the Championships, selection was again taking place for the Service Squad and twenty girls went forward to be coached all day on the Saturday followed by what should have been a match against Somerset on the Sunday afternoon, but the opposition failed to arrive.

Two Service teams met again the weekend of 3 and 4 for matches against Bournemouth and North Hampshire respectively, results not known as yet. We now go on to enjoy what looks like a very busy season of netball which we hope will bring some good results especially the matches against the other Women's Services. We hope 1973-74 will be a memorable year for the Wrens Service Netball Team.



**Mr HAYWARD**

Shortly to be leaving the *Mercury* scene is Mr. Hayward of the M/T section. Mr. Hayward first came to *Mercury* shortly after the war in May 1946, after serving in the RN, which he left as a PO Tel. He was promoted to chargehand/driver in November 1964 and is soon transferring to PSTO(N) for duties in the dockyard. I am sure we all wish him well for the future, and thank him for his services to all at *Mercury* over the past years.

Our apologies to CPOMA, J.G. HINTON, RNR, RS McCOY and 'JAYCEE, whose articles could not be included due to lack of space.

# COMMUNICATIONS GAZEITE

## APPOINTMENTS

EDITORS' 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.*

Name	Rank	Whither
ADAMS, J.	Lieut	Fife
BEE, M. J.	A/Sub Lieut	Ark Royal
BENSON, J. M.	Lt-Cdr	Ambuscade
BEARD, C. G. R.	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
BERTHON, S. F.	Commodore	FO Medway/Port Admiral Chatham
BALFOUR, H. M.	Commander	MOD (addl) Chief Defence Staff
BROOKS, A. H.	Lieut	Mercury (AS CA)
BOOTH, P. M.	Second Officer	MOD (DNS)
BRYANS, J. P. G.	Lt-Cdr	COMCLYDE
BURLING, W. J.	Lieut	COMSUBMED
BUNTING, R. H. W.	Lieut	Antrim
BURNS, B.	Lt-Cdr	SCO to FOST
CLINTON, T. E.	Lt-Cdr	HQDCN
COBLEY, C. K. D.	Lt-Cdr	FOSNI
COSSINS, R. A. P.	Lieut	SCO to FOGIB
CRAIG, S. E.	Second Officer	AFNORTH
DRAKE-WILKES, S.	Lt-Cdr	Mercury (as K1)
FINDLAY, J. M.	Commander	Dryad (addl)
FLOWER, D. W.	Lieut	COMNAVSOUTH
FRANKLIN, R. D.	Captain	Director of Naval Signals
FREEMAN, M. J. L.	Commander	SOWC
GORING, E. Y. C.	Lt-Cdr	Mercury (X Sect)
GRIEG, P. G. M.	Lt-Cdr	MOD for DIS
GRANT, I. F.	Commander	Intrepid as Executive Officer
GRIMSEY, R.	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
GRIGGS, J. R.	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
HERRING, L. M.	Second Officer	Warrior for CINCFLEET
HEWITT, E. M. G.	Commander	Pembroke as Executive Officer
HOWARD, D. M. A.	Lt-Cdr	Intrepid
HOWELL, R.	Lieut	Shrivenham (advance C course)
HUDSON, J. T.	Lieut	DGW(N)/DSWP(N) at ASWE
HUGHES, S. E.	Lt-Cdr	MOD (DNS)
INGHAM, D. J.	A/Sub-Lt	Ark Royal
IVOL, G. J.	A/Sub-Lt	Hermes
JACKSON, S.	Lieut	Mercury (as W1)
JONES, M. M.	First Officer	Dauntless
KEATE, H. R.	Captain	Antrim in Command (14.5.74)
KEMP, N. G.	Lieut	RN Staff course
KERRISON, A. C.	Lieut	Drake STC
KNAPP, M. G. A.	Lieut	President for RN Staff course Greenwich
KNIGHT, A. E.	Lieut	Apollo
LAING, T. M.	Commander	Dryad as Executive Officer
LANNIGAN	Lieut	Ran Exchange (as PWO)
LENNON, J.	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
LORD, J. T.	Commander	Antrim as Executive Officer
MACKILLIGIN, W. H. M.	Commander	DFWMS
MACDONALD, A. N. A.	Commander	MOD (Controller Defence Comms Network)
MCDONALD, P. D.	Lieut	Lochinvar
MCWALTERS, P. G.	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
MUNRO, P. O. D.	Lieut	Chawton as Executive Officer
PRATT, T.	Lieut	Commcen Whitehall
PALMER, D. L.	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course



Racal Slough, a member of the highly successful Racal Electronics Group, are seeking experienced communications engineers for the following positions :

## Test Department Supervisor

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RICHARDS, M. A. H. ..	Lieut	Mercury (X section)
ROBERTSON, H. A. ..	Lt-Cdr	DGW(N)/DSWP(N)
ROGERS, N. R. ... ..	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
SALT, L. S. ... ..	Lieut	Porpoise
SAYCE, D. C. ... ..	Lieut	Shrivenham
SAMPSON, G. E. ... ..	Captain	Sultan for AIB
SKINLEY, M. R. ... ..	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
SMITH, W. V. J. ... ..	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
SMITH, J. C. ... ..	A/Sub-Lt	Argonaut
STANFORD, P. M. ... ..	Captain	Hermione as F5
TALMA, R. W. ... ..	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
THOMPSON, R. A. ... ..	Commander	COMEDNOREAST
TRALL, C. G. ... ..	Commander	MOD (DNOR)
WAILS, P. ... ..	Lieut	Fort Southwick as OIC
Webb, A. R. ... ..	Sub-Lt	Mercury (SD)(C) course
WHEEN, P. A. C. ... ..	Lieut	Bristol
Wilson, G. S. ... ..	Sub-Lt	Hermes
WILTON, A. W. R. ... ..	Lieut	RAFCD A Thatcham

### PROMOTIONS

To Rear-Admiral: S. F. BERTHON (7 Jan 74)

To Lieutenant Commander: H. A. ROBERTSON  
T. E. CLINTON  
M. D. Y. PHILLIPS  
D. T. TAYLOR

To Lieutenant: R. C. WHITBY-SMITH  
A. C. KERRISON  
L. F. LEVENE  
J. E. RIDOUTT  
D. J. HILDRETH  
A. F. CARR  
P. G. GADSDEN

To Second Officer: R. LOCKE

### RETIREMENTS

Lieut-Comdr G. M. TIMPSON  
Lieut R. A. COBB  
Lieut M. MURPHY  
Sub-Lieut J. C. EDWARDS

Lieut-Comdr H. P. H. O'BRIEN  
Lieut W. H. DAVIS  
Lieut E. W. McCULLOUGH, BEM

### SELECTED FOR PROMOTION TO:

CCY  
M. J. STEVENSON  
K. L. DENNING  
R. PENLINGTON  
R. L. W. HANSHAW  
N. G. PAUL  
D. S. MORRIS  
B. R. NABBS  
K. J. WILLIAMS  
M. W. STENNING  
J. HEWITT  
B. R. WING  
J. D. BAKER  
J. H. MACKINNON  
R. T. MARTIN  
D. DAIN  
M. R. SIMMONS

F. MORRIS  
D. N. PUGHE  
  
CRS(S)  
E. T. BLINDELL  
M. WILKINSON  
P. JACKSON  
D. HAMMERSLEY  
D. K. F. THOMAS  
R. DAVIS  
D. HAMILTON  
D. OWEN  
R. J. WAKEFIELD  
A. E. K. YALLOP

S. J. RAYNER  
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A. J. ROOD  
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R. R. SOUTHARD  
J. D. COLMER  
N. MACLACHLAN  
J. A. ATKINSON  
A. I. PEARCE  
R. E. MCGAHEY  
M. D. NICKERSON  
G. BOWERS  
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# DRAFTING

Only names that have been included in articles from ships and establishments and not printed elsewhere in the magazine are shown here. Reading FLEET SECTION NEWS will give you the whereabouts of many of your friends. Please forward any drafts you wish shown in our next edition with your article for the Spring 1974 Edition of the magazine. Individuals may write directly to the Editor if they wish.

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.

Name	Rate	Whither	Name	Rate	Whither	Name	Rate	Whither
ADAMSON K. P.	RO3(W)	Ajax	COOPER A. J.	CRS(W)	Undaunted	HARDY N. S.	RO3(W)	Apollo
ALBON	LRO(W)	Tartar	COLLINS B.	LRO(W)	Mohawk	HAMILTON C. I.	LRO(G)	RNU
ALLEN	LRO(T)	Devonshire	COTCHER E.	RO3(T)	STANAV- FORLANT	HALLIHAN D. A.	CRS	Tangmere Undaunted
ALLEN D. G.	LRO(G)	Mercury	COLEMAN G. E.	RO3(G)	Undaunted	HARTNETT G. M. J.	JRO(W)	Blake
ALLISON J. H.	LRO(T)	FOF1	CONNELL J. A.	LRO(W)	Gurkha	HALL C. J.	RO2(G)	Galatea
ARNOLD	LRO(T)	Ark Royal	COLEMAN G. L.	RO3(G)	Tiger	HALL C. J.	RO2(G)	Galatea
AUSTIN D. J.	RO3(W)	Mercury	COOMBER J. A.	RS	Ark Royal	HALL L.	LRO(T)	Excellent
ARMSTRONG E. K.	RO2(G)	Mercury	COUTTS G. E.	LRO(G)	Zulu	HILL R. C.	CRS	Centurion
BAJONA M.	LRO(G)	Galatea	COTTE L. W.	JRO(G)	Ark Royal	HAIG-HADFIELD M.	RS(W)	Kent
BAKER J. D.	CY	Mercury	CRAMB D.	RO2(T)	Sheffield	HALES P. A.	RO1(G)	FOST
BATEMAN J. C.	RS(W)	Mercury	CROZIER I. M.	RS	Ambuscade	HARRISON B. G.	LRO(T)	Dryad
BAGNALL	RS	Victory	CROUGHTON J. B.	RO1(G)	Apollo	HAYWARD P. W.	JRO(G)	Hermes
BARROW R. P.	RO1(W)	Mercury	CROCKET A. D. J.	CRS	Dolphin	HANCOCK J. A.	RO2(W)	Sirius
BARRY D. M.	LRO(W)	Diomede	CROSSLEY D. W.	RO3(T)	Mercury	HARRIS D. W.	LRO(T)	FOF2
BARLOW P. L.	RO2(G)	Mercury	GRAYFORD P. R.	LRO(G)	CINCNAV- HOME	HATCH J. P.	LRO(W)	Mercury
BATHO A. G.	RS	Mercury	GREASEY S. D.	JRO(T)	Danae	HARRIS A. J.	CRS(S)	9 Sig Regt
BARLOW R. J.	RO1(G)	Sirius	CROSSLEY D. W.	RO3(T)	Tiger	HEATHER S. G.	LRO(T)	Andromeda
BARLEY M. J.	RO3(W)	Russell	CROUCHER P. J.	LRO(T)	Mercury	HEATON J. R.	RO2(G)	Charybdis
BELL P. M.	JRO(W)	Kent	CROUCH A. R.	CY	Mercury	HICK J. B.	RS	Antelope
BEATIE W. F.	RO2(G)	Mercury	CUTTLE K.	RO2(G)	Whitehall	HILL D. R.	RO3(W)	Mercury
BEATTIE W. F.	RO2(G)	RN Party	DARBY C. J.	RO1(G)	Mercury	HILL A. S.	JRO(T)	Ark Royal
BATES J. C. C.	RS(S)	Upton	DAYSH W. M.	JRO(G)	Hermes	HOUSTON J.	CRS	Fisgard
BARN T. F.	RO2(G)	Birdclass	DAVIES D. J.	LRO(W)	Charybdis	HOWISON J.	CRS(W)	Glamorgan
BARWICK C. B.	RS	Chichester	DAVIES D. W.	LRO(T)	Danae	HOOD B.	RS(W)	HOAF- SOUTH
BIRD P.	RO1(T)	Herald	DALE J. M.	LRO(G)	Fearless	HODGSON R. J.	LRO(T)	Mercury
BIRD D. G.	JRO(G)	Grenville	DICKSON S. A.	LRO(T)	Ark Royal	HOWARD I. J.	CY	Ark Royal
BISSSEL I. J.	LRO(T)	Centurion	DICKSON I. C.	RO2(G)	Nurton	HOPKINS G. C.	LRO(G)	Hermione
BISSSEL S.	CY	Mercury	DOBSON G. W.	RO2(T)	CINC- FLEET	HOLMES J. T.	RO2(G)	Repulse
BLACK E.	JRO(G)	Achilles	DOUST J. W.	RO2(W)	Mercury	HOSFORD P. J.	LRO(W)	Mercury
BLOWMAN C.	RS	Fife	DOUGLAS J. T.	RO2(T)	Mercury	HUGHES D. L.	RO2(G)	Glamorgan
BLOGG T. A.	RO3(G)	Nubian	DRUMMOND R. M.	RO2(G)	Lochinvar	JACKSON D.	CY	Rhyl
BONNAR J. J.	LRO(G)	Jupiter	DREWETT C. E.	RO1(G)	Devonshire	JACKSON T.	JRO(T)	Russell
BOURNE M. R.	RO3(G)	Blake	DREW D. J.	RS(W)	Tiger	JACQUES R.	LRO(W)	Excellent
BRADELY J. A.	FCRS	Mercury	DRAYTON G. F.	LRO(T)	Mercury	JEROME D. L.	RO1(T)	CINCNAV HOME
BREWAN A. A. F.	RS	Dolphin	DUCAN G.	FCCY	Leander	JEFFERSON J. B.	LRO(W)	Rhyl
BRAIDWOOD K. W.	RO2(G)	Tartar	DUGGAN R.	RO3(G)	Kellington	JONES M. R.	RO2(T)	Drake
BROOMFIELD I. C.	JRO(W)	Ariadne	DUNNIGHAM W. J. M.	LRO(T)	Whitby	JONES A. R.	LRO(G)	Intrepid
BREEZE D. W.	RO2(T)	Mercury	DUNNAGE J. W.	RO2(W)	Whitehall	JONES E. J.	RO2(G)	Mercury
BROWNIE R.	LRO(T)	Mercury	EASTWOOD A. G.	JRO(G)	Ark Royal	JONES B. E.	LRO(T)	Dundas
BROOKER	JRO(T)	Mercury	EDWARDS B. T.	RO1(G)	Lewiston	JONES J.	RO2(G)	Monkton
BROWN S. P.	RO2(G)	CINCNAV- HOME	EDWARDS J.	JRO(T)	Juno	JOHNSTONE J.	RO2(W)	Lincoln
BROWNE R. G.	LRO(G)	Mercury	EDMONDS K. D.	RO2(G)	Andromeda	JOSEPH A.	LRO(G)	Ark Royal
BRINDLEY J. I.	RO1(G)	Brighton	ELLAM P. J.	LRO(G)	CINCNA- HOME	KENNEDY J.	RS	Ark Royal
BROWN C. B.	RO1(T)	Mercury	EVANS P. R.	RO2(G)	Yarnton	KENNETT P. H.	RO2(W)	Falmouth
BROWN M. B.	JRO(T)	Bulwark	FARNES A. J.	CY	Brighton	KERR M. H.	RO2(W)	Salisbury
BROWN J.	RO3(W)	Galatea	FARMER M. C.	LRO(W)	Ark Royal	KERSLAKE	CY	Drake
BROWN M.	LRO(T)	Drake	FERGUSON S.	LRO(T)	Bacchante	KEMP D. R.	LRO(T)	Dido
BROWNE P.	RO2(G)	Wilton	FISHER D.	LRO(W)	Fife	KENNEDY A.	RO3(T)	Antrim
BRACK R.	RO2(G)	Torquay	FISHER T.	RS	CINCNA- HOME	KENYON R. A.	RO1(G)	Mercury
BURNHAM C. I.	RO2(G)	Charybdis	FISH M. A.	LRO(W)	Mercury	KELLOW C.	RO2(T)	Brighton
BUSCALL S.	JRO(T)	Brighton	FLEMING D. W.	LRO(T)	Grenville	KENNIFORD S. J.	JRO(T)	Scylla
BROWNSTONE R. J.	CRS	Sheffield	FORD R. A.	LRO(G)	Dido	KILLEN T. I.	JRO(G)	Mercury
BURNS A.	RO2	Salisbury	FROOM P. E.	RO1(T)	Andromeda	KIMBER C. F.	LRO(G)	Rooke
BURKE B.	RO1(T)	Antrim	GAUGHAN M.	CCY	Juno	KILLEN T. I.	JRO(G)	Blake
BURWOOD H. F.	LRO(G)	Rhyl	GALLAGHER P. M.	LRO(T)	Charybdis	KIBBLE K. S.	RO2(W)	Whitby
BURTON K.	RO2(G)	Mercury	GARNSWORTHY D. J.	LRO(T)	Pembroke	KIRRAHE H. M.	RO2(G)	Dolphin
BURKS L. G.	RS	Tiger	GERRARD R. G.	RO1(T)	Llandaff	KIRBY M. H.	LRO(G)	Mercury
CARRINGTON R. C.	LRO(W)	Mercury	GEERE T. J.	LRO(T)	Blake	KNOWLES A. L.	JRO(W)	Mercury
CAREY W. H.	JRO(T)	Mercury	GILLINGHAM W. H.	RO2(T)	Mercury	KNOWLES	RO3(W)	Tiger
CANNON R. F.	LRO(T)	Mercury	GIBSON H. S.	LRO(G)	Kent	LAMEY C. W.	RO2(G)	Mercury
CARR A. W.	LRO(W)	Salisbury	GLASS D. T. G.	JRO(G)	Mohawk	LANGLER A.	LRO(G)	Mercury
CARTAR B. G.	JRO(T)	Ajax	GLADMAN J. M.	RO3(W)	Eskimo	LAYBOURNE	CRS(W)	Mercury
CASSEY J. D.	RO2 W	Neptune	GLAZIER T. C.	CY	Sheffield	LAMBERT M. R.	JRO(G)	Fearless
CARNEGIE E. N.	RO2 G	Mercury	GOODMAN D. L.	RO3(G)	Sheffield	LEE P. R.	JRO(W)	Jaguar
CARDIN C.	JRO T	Fearless	GOULD M.	LRO(W)	Hermione	LEWIS D. M.	RS	Zulu
CAHILL S. A.	JRO T	Norfolk	GODWIN P. E.	JRO(W)	Bulldog	LEGG P. E.	LRO(W)	Mercury
CHIDDICKS C. J.	LRO(W)	Londonderry	GOODING P. L.	RO2(G)	Zulu	LEE G. D.	RO2(T)	Glasserton
CHILDS G. A.	JRO(T)	Grenville	GREEN J. W.	JRO(T)	Jaguar	LITTLEFIELD J. A.	RS	Saker
CHAMPION G. W. J.	RO1(G)	Drake	GRIFFITHS D. J.	RO2	Dido	LIPPMAN D.	RO2(G)	COMIBER- LANT
CLIFFORD E. H.	LRO(W)	Dido	GRANGER J. R.	RS(W)	Danae	LONG I. M.	RO2(T)	Lowestoft
CLIFFORD I. M.	RO2(G)	Scimitar	GUY S. W.	JRO(T)	Blake	LOUTH D. M.	RO2(G)	Galatea
CLARE J. C.	RO1(G)	Ark Royal	GAUGHAN M.	CCY	Juno	LOVELL M. J.	CRS	Drake
CLARK C. H.	CY	Torquay	GALLAGHER P. M.	LRO(T)	Charybdis	LOVATT D. W.	RO1	Mercury
CLEMENTS G. P.	RO1(W)	Apollo	GARNSWORTHY D. J.	LRO(T)	Pembroke	LUCAS B. A.	CRS	Mercury
CLAMP E. C.	RS(S)	Mercury	GERRARD R. G.	RO1(T)	Llandaff	LUMSDAN D.	LRO(T)	Royal Yacht
COLBMAN G. L.	JRO(G)	Mercury	GEERE T. J.	LRO(T)	Blake	LUDDGATE P. J.	RO2(G)	Dolphin
COLLINS A. L.	JRO(T)	Mercury	GILLINGHAM W. H.	RO2(T)	Mercury			
COOK J. H.	RS	Mercury	GIBSON H. S.	LRO(G)	Kent			
CONNOR W. G.	RO2(T)	Tartar	GLASS D. T. G.	JRO(G)	Mohawk			
COWEN K.	RO3(G)	Antrim	GLADMAN J. M.	RO3(W)	Eskimo			
COOK P. J.	RO2(T)	Juno	GLAZIER T. C.	CY	Sheffield			

Name	Rate	Whither	Name	Rate	Whither	Name	Rate	Whither
MACKENZIE J. R.	JRO(G)	Mercury	PRICE G. C.	RO2(G)	Whitehall	TAYLOR D. B.	RS	Hydra
MACGILLIVRAY D.	CY	Salisbury	PURVES W. K.	RO1(G)	Lochinvar	TAYLOR M. J.	RS	Opossum
MAYNE H. J.	RO2(T)	Birdclass				TAYLOR L. G.	RS	Hardy
MCCORMICK P. M.	RO2(G)	Birdclass	READ B. J.	LRO(G)	Fife	TAYLOR A. L.	RO3(T)	Achilles
MCINTOSH J. R.	JRO(G)	Achilles	REID D. G.	RO1(G)	CINCNAV- HOME	TAYLOR J. L.	RO1(G)	Soberton
MOORHOUSE D.	JRO(G)	Mercury	RHATIGAN D. P.	RO1(G)	Centurion	THOMPSON G.	RO2(G)	Hermes
MOLHOLLAND J.	LRO(G)	Matapan	RICHARDS J. S.	CPO PTI	Royal Arthur	THOMAS S. H.	RO2(G)	Mercury
MOXEY D. J.	RO2(G)	Mermaid	RIEFTZLER C. M.	CRS	Whitehall	TRIBE K. M.	LRO(G)	Mercury
MORGANS R.	LRO(W)	Mercury	RICHMOND L.	RO2(G)	Whitehall	TURTON P. G.	RO2(G)	Hecla
MUIR R.	LRO(W)	Mercury	RICHFORD	LRO(T)	Mercury			
			RICKARD C. D.	RO3(T)	Mercury	UPCRAFT D. S.	LRO(T)	Hermione
NAYLOR G.	JRO(T)	Lowestoft	RITCHIE	JRO(G)	Ark Royal	UNWIN K. A.	RO3(T)	Ashanti
NEWTON T. H.	RS	Mercury	RICHMOND L.	RO2(G)	Soberton			
NEAME P.	JRO(T)	Mercury	ROSS I. R.	RO1(G)	Hermione	VANSTONE P. C.	JRO(T)	Eskimo
NEWCEY C. H.	LRO(T)	Mercury	ROBINSON P.	RO1(W)	Zulu	VARTY C.	LRO(G)	Eastbourne
NELSON S. W.	JRO(W)	Mercury	ROBERTS G. T.	CY	Mercury			
NEAME P.	JRO(T)	Tiger						
NICOL J. C.	RO3(G)	Zulu	SHARMAN P. J. C.	CY	Bacchante	WALSH D. L.	LRO(T)	Hydra
NOXON P.	CY	Tiger	SHILTON G. D.	LRO(G)	Ajax	WATKINS C. J.	RO2(T)	Ashanti
NORCLIFFE K. V.	LRO(T)	Zulu	SHERMAN W. E.	RS	Lowestoft	WARFIELD R. J.	CY	Exmouth
			SHERLDAN G. F.	RO3(T)	Zulu	WATERFIELD A. P.	JRO(T)	Ark Royal
O'SHEA M. G.	LS PT2	Ashanti	SIDEBOTTOM T. W.	LRO(G)	Neptune	WALKER B.	RO2(G)	Neptune
			SKULL M.	LRO(T)	Torquay	WHITING S. B.	LRO(G)	COMNAV- SOUTH
PARRY S. D.	RO1(W)	Mercury	SLATER S. P.	RO2(G)	Lochinvar	WHYTE A. L. C.	RO2(T)	Amazon
PATTINSON J. N.	LRO(T)	Mercury	SMITH P. T.	RO2(T)	Mercury	WHEATLEY G. R.	JRO(T)	Mercury
PATER P. J.	JRO(G)	Eskimo	SMITH R. T.	RO2(W)	Mercury	WHITE M. J.	LRO(G)	Drake
PARROTT S.	RO3(T)	Galatea	SMITH C. J.	RO2(G)	Walrus	WILLIAMS S. P.	JRO(G)	Jaguar
PAGE M. J.	RO2(G)	Warrior	SMITH P. W.	JRO(G)	Ark Royal	WILLIAMS J.	RO2(G)	Finwhale
PARKINSON A. D.	CY	Saker	STEER R. J.	JRO(W)	Eskimo	WILLIAMS J. H.	RO3(W)	Tiger
PAVIER B. I.	LRO(T)	Glamorgan	STEELE R. P.	LRO(T)	Mercury	WILLIAMS S. P.	JRO(G)	Abdiel
PARKER K.	JRO(G)	Ark Royal	STURMAN H. G.	RO1(G)	CINCEAST- LANT	WILLIAMS G. V.	LCK	Mercury
PEELO A. J.	RO1(G)	CINC- FLEET				WILSON S. P.	RO3(G)	Galatea
			STANNARD C. R.	RO2(G)	Mercury	WORK K. W. J.	RO3(G)	Tiger
PHILLIPS M. J. F.	POWTR	Mercury	STEWART T. M. J.	RO2(T)	Mercury	WOOD K. G.	LRO(W)	Mercury
PIMBLOTT S. C.	LRO(G)	Drake	STONE K. S.	RS(S)	9 Sig Regt	WOOTTON R.	RO2(G)	Valiant
PILSBURY J.	RO3(T)	Tiger	SUTHERLAND J. A.	LRO(G)	Bulwark	WRIGHT A.	LRO(T)	Mercury
PITKIN J. J.	RO2(T)	Mohawk	SWINDELLS R. E.	RO1(G)	COMIBER- LANT			
PLEASANCE J. C.	MA	Mercury				YEO J. S.	JRO(T)	Rhyl
POOLE B.	LRO(W)	Neptune	TAYLOR M. S.	RO2(G)	Osiris	YOUNG S. P.	RO2(G)	Hydra
POWELL B.	JRO(W)	Mercury	TAYLOR P. W.	LRO(G)	Warrior	YOUNG J. F.	CY	Mercury
POWELL S. J.	JRO(G)	Rhyl				YOUNG W. J.	RO3(G)	Tiger
PRESTON M. J.	RO2(G)	Amazon						

## COMMISSIONING FORECASTS

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following details are forecast only, changes well may take place at short notice. Details are given in the order: Ship, Type, Date if known, Commitment.*

Types of service are as follows:

GSS	General Sea Service	HSS	Home Sea Service—Accompanied
GSC	General Service Commission	PS	Port Service

<i>Ajax</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, November, Commission at Devonport	GSS Home/E of Suez
<i>Hydra</i>	.. ..	Survey Ship, November, FSE of Suez	
<i>Eskimo</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, December, GSS Home/WI	
<i>Tartar</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, December, GSS Home/WI	
<i>Mermaid</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, December, Commissioning Chatham, GSS	
<i>Kirkliston</i>	.. ..	Mine Hunter, February, Trials Crew at Gibraltar, Sea	
<i>Herald</i>	.. ..	Survey Ship, March, Trials Crew at Portsmouth, PS	
<i>Berwick</i>	.. ..	AS Frigate, Recommissioning Gibraltar, GSS	
<i>Herald</i>	.. ..	Survey Ship, March, Commissioning Portsmouth, GSS/E of Suez	
<i>Zulu</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, May, Trials Crew at Rosyth, PS	
<i>Galatea</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, May, Trials Crew at Devonport, PS	
<i>Grenville</i>	.. ..	AS Frigate, May, LR party at Portsmouth, PS	
<i>Penelope</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, May, C and M party at Devonport, PS	
<i>Salisbury</i>	.. ..	AD Frigate, June, Devonport, GSS/Home/E of Suez	
<i>Endurance</i>	.. ..	Ice Patrol Ship, Portsmouth, Recommission, GSS Home/SASA (June)	
<i>Lynx</i>	.. ..	AA Frigate, June, Refit crew at Rosyth, Shore	
<i>Galatea</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, July, Commissions Devonport, GSS Home/E of Suez	
<i>Phoebe</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, August, C and M party at Devonport, PS	
<i>Zulu</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, August, Commissions at Rosyth, GSS Home/WI	
<i>Bronington</i>	.. ..	Mine Hunter, October, Trials crew at Gibraltar, PS	
<i>London</i>	.. ..	GM Destroyer, October, Trials crew at Portsmouth, PS	
<i>Bronington</i>	.. ..	Mine Hunter, November, Recommission Rosyth, GSS	
<i>Hydra</i>	.. ..	Survey Ship, November, Recommission Portsmouth, FS/E of Suez	
<i>Aurora</i>	.. ..	GP Frigate, December, Trials crew at Chatham, PS	

# Naval supremacy

Redifon's new Naval Radiotelephone equipment is now in Senior Service. Selected by the Royal Navy, the 643 transmitter is the product of private initiative and development. With its companion CJP general-purpose receiver, this new radiotelephone has the vital responsibility of updating medium and long distance communications between British warships of all classes and shore bases.

Despite its big task, the 643 can be operated easily with minimum training. Operators can set rapidly to pre-determined frequencies, search

crowded bands or hunt for those elusive coast stations.

Throughout the 1970's the Redifon 643 will play a key naval role; not only for the Royal Navy but also for all the most modern navies throughout the world.

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## Redifon Telecommunications Limited

