

THE ROYAL MARINES BAND



Practically every morning since before the ship commissioned, eighteen khaki-clad figures have carried an assortment of musical instruments from their place of residence in 6T1 Mess, up four decks, and have attempted to deposit them in the cinema. This routine varies little from day to day. A simple operation? In the words of the Prophet: "Not Pygmalion likely!"

"Whither goest thou?" says the flat sweeper.

"Er, to the starboard pocket," replies the bandsman, struggling beneath the weight of a string bass the size of a Carley float.

"Not this way, you're not. I'm scrubbing out!"

And so we wend our weary way to the other side of the ship and eventually arrive at the cinema to start our day's practice - much to the disgust of the leading chefs who are trying to get their heads down in the next compartment.

The extreme variations in temperatures that the ship has experienced have also played havoc with the band. Brass instruments froze solid while we played for Colours on the flight deck in January 1962, two violins cracked through excess heat in the Far East, and during a dance-band programme for a cocktail party held at Aden we had the harrowing experience of having all the four saxophones rendered u/s when the pads just dropped out.

Our activities both on board and ashore are many and interesting and the band engagement book is usually well filled. We have provided either a military band, dance band or orchestra for the commissioning ceremony, Colours, ceremonial guards, Divisions, ship's company and Wardroom dances, children's parties, concert party performances, cocktail parties, *Beat Retreat*, football matches, Crossing-the-Line ceremonies, entering and leaving harbour, funeral services, Wardroom dinners, church services, Television shows, and in Hong Kong we had the unique experience of playing for an all-night dance held on board one of the Star Ferry boats while cruising round the harbour.

In conclusion, since we have been on board, we have been asked a number of questions in connection with the band's activities. Here are the answers:

No! The Bandmaster does not carry a white stick because he is blind.

No! The string bass player cannot put his instrument under his chin, if he did the spike would stick in his neck.

Yes! We can play *In Far-away Places* and *In the Shadows*, in fact, given sufficient illumination we can play anywhere.

SHIPWRIGHT DEPARTMENT

Although only a comparatively small group, the chippies, work takes them to all parts of the ship, from truck to keel and stem to stern. No compartment or space is immune to their visitations, from the Island and the Flight Deck right down to the murky depths of the double bottoms. In fact as someone once remarked: "You certainly see shipwrights emerge from odd places." Whether he meant ashore or afloat is debatable.



ROUTINE REPAIR WORK

The work load of the department has always been fairly heavy, particularly since it covers the repair and maintenance of the whole of the hull structure and fittings, irrespective of whether the materials are metal, timber or the new plastics. With the decreasing use of timber in warships, the accent is on metalwork. This work is mainly carried out in the Blacksmith's shop under the supervision of those redoubtable twins McCadden and Veal. Here large, small and assorted chunks of metal are cut, shaped and welded to replace those parts of the Ark which have succumbed to gales, accidents and age. It may be, however, that Veal's *moment of truth* occurs regularly on the Cable Deck, where he swings the grandfather of all hammers (the largest the Navy can supply) to let go the anchor. When not in use, this hammer stands outside 6E Petty Officers' Mess like a blunt, immovable *Excalibur*.



Sixty-one bathrooms and 24 heads with their associated fresh and salt water supplies, valves, taps, scuppers and drains bring a lot of overtime to Chief Plumber Wickens; 55 years of age, he is truly the Noah of the ship. It is in the Plumbers' shop that keys are cut and it is perhaps of salutary interest to note that the *two bobs* contributed to the Welfare Fund for replaced kit-locker keys total over £80 . . . quite a bunch of keys!



CAPTAIN'S TABLE

SHIPWRIGHT DEPARTMENT



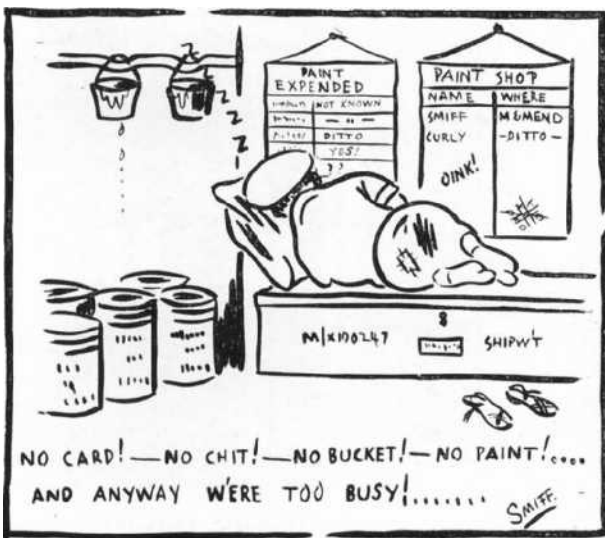
The Chippies shop handles an extensive range of work from the construction of a destroyer's accommodation ladder (necessitated by one of our coxswains apparently going berserk), repairs to mess doors, tables and kit lockers, to modifications to aircraft. A brisk business is also maintained in the production of Splash Targets for this ship and those in company.

Who hasn't, at some time or other, made his way to the Paint shop, or perhaps been responsible for sending someone else. Do you realize that so far this commission all those small pots have added up to some 10,000 gallons? We demand it and

issue it, you use it, which means quite a lot of paint work all round, particularly now that we all have to use buckets.

From the Planned Maintenance Office a constant survey of the hull structure is organized, this involves some two thousand compartments. All the Job Cards come to this office and since any man in the ship can make one out, it is not surprising that 2,500 officers and men produce an awful lot of cards.

One cannot leave the problem of repairs and maintenance without mentioning the assistance given by the *mates*, both M.Es and seamen, whose untiring and cheerful efforts have helped us so much.



Generally speaking there has been no major operation or social task that the department has not featured in, whether it be *digging up* large areas of the flight deck, rigging for cocktail parties, children's parties or grassing *the line* ceremonies, vintaging pieces of the catapult rooms, all is grist to the mill. When we leave the ship we will have done a lot of things which we ought to have done and, no doubt, a lot of things which we ought not to have done. but on the whole we hope we have given satisfaction.

ENTERTAINMENT

"THE MIKADO"

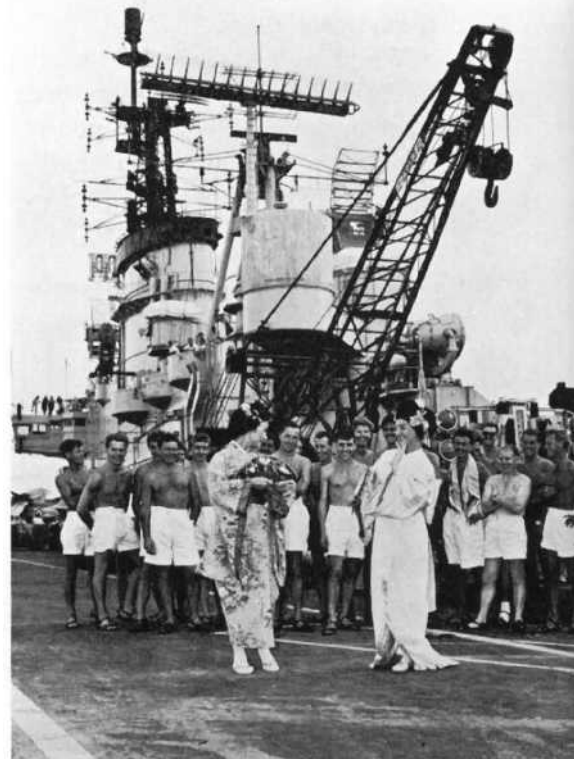
To undertake a performance of this Savoy opera, possibly the most famous of all the Gilbert and Sullivan productions, is normally a task to daunt even the most venturesome of amateur companies, but to offer to perform aboard one of Her Majesty's carriers in the torrid atmosphere prevailing in Aden indicates a strength of public spirit deserving of the highest praise.

To say that we were surprised when we received a signal saying that the Steamer Point Light Opera Society were prepared to undertake this mammoth task is a gross understatement, we realized that it involved transporting across three miles of open anchorage a cast of sixty, of whom nearly half were women, a stage staff of thirty-eight, an orchestra of twenty-eight, scenery, lighting equipment, costumes and all the other paraphernalia attendant upon a live stage show.

Nevertheless we were delighted at the prospect, for entertainment in Aden is very much at a premium. All the arrangements were made; despite a bumpy crossing all the cast and gear arrived; the audience was assembled, then from the moment we heard the opening chorus of the *Gentlemen of Japan* we knew we were in for a delightful evening. Yum-Yum enchanted, Katisha threatened, Ko-Ko vacillated, all the old familiar delights were there, set off by as delightful a chorus of Japanese ladies as you'll ever see, so that in no time at all, as it seemed, Nanki-Poo had disclosed that he was the son of the Mikado and won the hand of Yum-Yum; Ko-Ko had been engineered into a marriage with Katisha and reluctantly we found ourselves back from the wonderful world of Gilbertian fantasy and once more in the steamy reality of the upper hangar.



THE ENTIRE CAST OF THE *MIKADO*



YUM-YUM AND PITTI-SING,

ENTERTAINMENT

"WAKE UP AND SMILE"

This was a U.S.O. show which was currently touring the Pacific area at the time that the ship was in Okinawa. The United Services Organization is a non-profit-making company which derives its funds from private contributions by the American public, it serves all the armed forces of the United States and its motto is *At All Times In All Climes*.

The members of the company were Gene Evans, manager and master of ceremonies, also singer, comic and impersonator; Jeanne Evans, his wife, singer and dancer; Hank Sieman, ventriloquist, and Dorothy, his wife, who assists him in his act; Carole Jason, dancer; Ramon Austin, pianist and trumpeter; Joe Chapelle, banjoist and guitarist; Tom Wofford, drummer.

They gave two performances in the upper hangar, the first one was for the personnel of other ships in Buckner Bay, both British and U.S., with a leavening from *Ark Royal*, while the second was for *Ark Royal* only. They gave an extremely slick, polished show which was much appreciated by all who saw it.



A PROVOCATIVE NUMBER

ENTERTAINMENT

THE LONG AND THE SHORT AND THE TALL

This play, by Willis Hall, which was such a success on the London stage, is set in the Malayan Jungle during the Japanese advance on Singapore in 1942. It concerns a small group of soldiers on patrol and their varying reactions to a Japanese prisoner. Since the cast is all male it is ideally suited for performance by any group of servicemen unable to call on female assistance. It was originally intended as an entry for the Drama Festival in Singapore but when the festival failed to materialize it was decided to put the play on in the Naval Base Theatre for the benefit of the ship's company. Unfortunately there were other local attractions which did not lack feminine assistance, and the audience was rather small for both performances. This was a great disappointment to the cast and company as a whole who had worked very hard and put on a very creditable show.

CAST

456 SGT. MITCHEM, R.	<i>Vic Perry-Evans</i>
839 CPL. JOHNSTONE, E.	<i>Bob Shilling</i>
594 L. CPL. MACLEISH, A. J.	<i>Thomas Mackay</i>
632 PTE. WHITAKER, S.	<i>Phil d'Authreau</i>
777 PTE. EVANS, T. E.	<i>Wallace Buckingham</i>
877 PTE. BAMFORTH, C.	<i>David Mallett</i>
611 PTE. SMITH, P.	<i>Eric Gordon</i>
JAPANESE SOLDIER	<i>John Cowie</i>

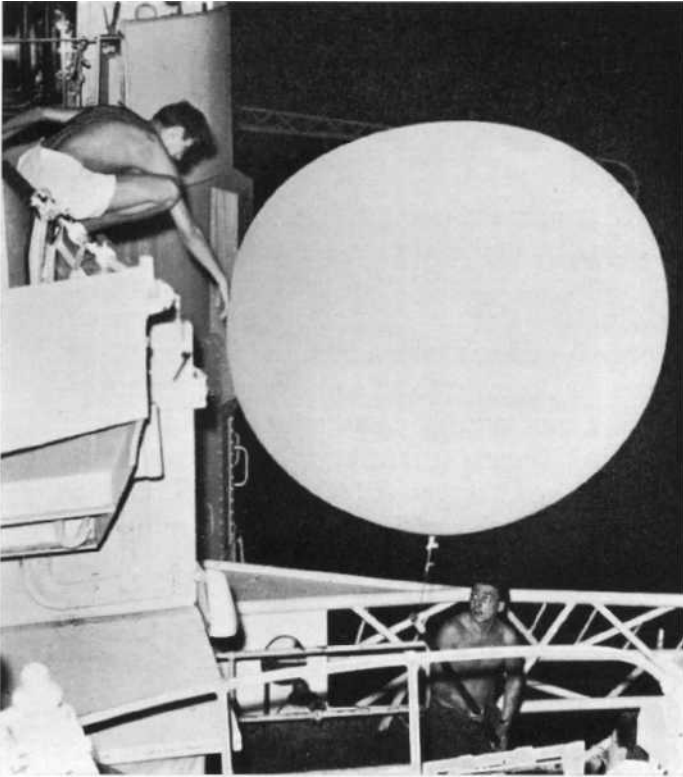
Produced by Jim Slater

Backstage Staff: David Dacam, John Harris, Trevor Williams, Geoffrey Turner, Bob Hufflett, Derek Freeman, Bob Barclay, Brian Lowe, Alan Hallwood, David Hewlett.



"WHITAKER" TRIES TO MAKE CONTACT

WEATHER



A RADIO-SONDE BALLOON

"Haven't you blokes anything better to do than play about with balloons all day?"

The Meteorological (or Met which is easier to pronounce after 1130) office is a small alcove on 01 deck, wherein are gathered some of the best brains on the ship, literally devoted to sorting out and forecasting the weather.

The door is ever open, not as an invitation to anyone who pleases to enter, but as an invitation to anyone redundant inside to get out. For this reason the work is arranged so that as many people are out of the office as possible, usually leaving three inside. Their job is to cope with the information, which pours in by radio, giving details of the weather all over the world. (The only area for which we fail to get enough information is usually whichever one we happen to be in at the time.)

The duty observer plots this information on a chart, using symbols which to the layman suggest that he was brought up on the banks of the Nile

in about 2,000 B.C. In fact, in some cases, that's what we think as well. Having accomplished this dexterous and skilful task he hands over his work of art to the duty forecaster, an officer who is specially trained to understand the hieroglyphics. He looks at it, turns it round a few times, glances out of the scuttle, then, finally, picks up a 2B pencil and proceeds to wander all over the masterpiece. This apparently helps him to decide what the weather is likely to be over the next few hours, days, or weeks, depending upon how daring he is. This process is repeated every three hours.

As part of the world-wide weather network we also do our own observations. The observer arms himself with a fiendish device known as an *Assmann Clockwork Aspirated Psychrometer Mk. III* (which explains fully its function) and proceeds on to the G.D.P. to look at the weather. He takes the temperature (using the aforementioned machine), determines the wind direction (using funnel smoke, or blades of grass, as laid down in the handbook), estimates the visibility (if he can see that far), and guesses at the cloud and sea conditions. Carefully noting all this information on the form provided, *or on the back of an old envelope*, he returns to the office and codes it up so that it may be sent by radio to the nearest collecting centre.

The remainder of the on-watch met-men compose the balloon team. They are based in the *garage* just for'ard of S3 Bofors. One can usually be found, on a camp bed, observing cloud development and the other, on the shelf further inside, will be watching sea and swell conditions. At certain hours, however, they are suddenly electrified into action. Twice a day they release a small balloon which makes its lonely way into the upper atmosphere, which they then track, visually from the G.D.P. or by radar from the Met Office. This is used to determine the strength and direction of the upper winds. They have been known to reach 50,000 ft. but more often than not they disappear, into cloud, behind the mast, into the never-ending funnel smoke. or they just disintegrate in a cloud of french chalk.

And that is the way we spend our day. Does that answer the question?

THE COMMUNICATORS

You have possibly wondered what goes on in the various Communication Offices all over the ship with the earnest-looking men wearing earphones and tapping away at a Morse key or operating teletypewriter keyboard. Here are a few thoughts as to what all the *black magic* has been about.

We have never closed since the ship was first built and have always maintained some form of communication with the outside world whether from the centre of the Indian Ocean or when solidly bedded down in the dry dock at Plymouth. The only permanent link between the mighty *Ark* and civilization when we are at sea is maintained through the careful and specialized work of the Communication department. A slip of the finger, a wrong dot or dash, or a wrong piece of typing can make the difference between "Guzz for Christmas" or "No mail on board today". We have communicated with all sorts, ranging from merchant ships in distress to our brethren in the Army. We have concentrated on exercising with the latter since the task of the *Ark Royal* is primarily to support our khaki friends ashore. Several of our staff have taken to the desert and other less civilized areas of barren ground and it is reported that L. R.O.(G.) Holden was once seen swaying his way towards Tripoli on a camel with a portable radio strapped on the aftermost hump of the animal.

In the Main Signal Office, the *paper mill* has turned until it became red hot. Over 75,000 signals requiring more than 3 million sheets of paper have been duplicated and distributed about the ship. And, of course, we have made many acquaintances with members of every department when private telegrams have been sent into and out of the ship and dealt with in the Bridge Wireless Office.

It is always refreshing to get out of the ship whenever possible and so break the monotony of watch-keeping; among other tasks, we have provided communicators to work with the advance party liaison officer at Mombasa (lots of work, but how nice to have Mombasa and the night life to oneself until the ships arrive!); others have helped out on board our Royal Fleet Auxiliary store ships (rugged work), manning shore radio links, and backing up shore communication staffs in major naval ports.

In several harbours, Gibraltar and Hong Kong for example, we have made sure that our well-established liaison with the girls of the W.R.N.S. has been maintained and one of our team has had the *task* of being W.R.N.S. Liaison Advisor. The success of his efforts is proved by the various photographs taken of W.R.N.S. and communicators taken while on tour of the ship. None of the cameras has actually caught them holding hands on the Admiral's Bridge.

L.R.O.(W.) Bird has handled our sporting affairs with such zeal that often it has been difficult to fit in a quick meal between coming off watch and beating a puck about on the deck hockey pitch, or going ashore for a game of soccer.

We have flown the flag of F.O.A.C.; and that of Flag Officer, Second in Command, Far East Station, for shorter periods. This has meant that additional communication staffs have come on board and have been integrated with our watchkeepers. The reason for this is to enable us to handle the additional load of signals efficiently. We have enjoyed having these staffs, not solely for their assistance in handling the additional work-load, created when we carry officers who administer other ships, but for themselves.

One of the major problems of today is said to be lack of *communication*; between man and wife, between parents and children, between the *worker* and *management*; we may not be able to solve those, but we trust that within *Ark*, at least, we have succeeded in maintaining maximum communication throughout this commission.



THE MAIN SIGNAL OFFICE



WORKING A RADIO TELETYPEWRITER



HAPPY OPERATOR

VISUAL SIGNALLING



RADIO OPERATOR AT WORK ON A W.T. MAST

DOWN UNDER

Wanted

1,000 Young Women

You are invited to

A Dance

to be given by the men of

H.M.S. Ark Royal

At the

Pagoda

As the song says, "all the nice girls love a sailor", and there was no shortage of takers for the above offer. This is how the newspapers reported it.

Sailors Were Outnumbered

"Girls outnumbered sailors at a dance given by the officers and men of the visiting Royal Navy ships at South Perth last night. Nearly 3,000 people attended the dance - probably the biggest held in Perth for several years. Although 1,000 tickets were issued to W.A. girls, door attendants *did not query* hundreds of girls who arrived without tickets. (Ed. My italics.) Under giant Chinese lanterns - reminiscent of the Far East ports of Singapore and Hong Kong recently visited by the Royal Navy ships - the dancers were entertained by a ten-piece Navy band. More than 1,000 gallons of beer - 250 gallons in reserve - and 250 bottles of Champagne, with 72 bottles of whisky were provided for the dance. Special buses ran to all suburbs after the dance ended early this morning."



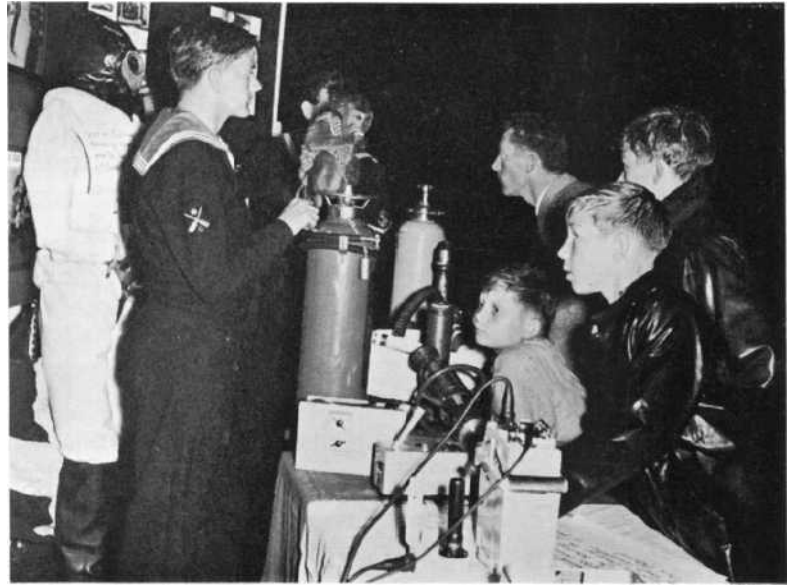
A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL

On the Saturday preceding the visit to Fremantle and Perth a group of Press, Radio and TV men were flown out by helicopter to watch the ship and its aircraft demonstrate their capabilities and it is obvious from the tone of their reports that they were all most impressed.

During his subsequent Press Conference, Captain Gibson described the ten-day visit as a *tremendous treat for all aboard* and this was just about the only way to sum up the visit to this little corner of Western Australia. From first to last there wasn't a dull moment; everybody, the local *cobbers* and the visiting pommies, saw to it that they went about with a smile on their face and a big hand extended in welcome. "Welcome to *Ark Royal*" and "Welcome to Western Australia". One great big continuous fiesta over the whole of the visit.

DOWN UNDER

Listen to both sides, first C. A. A. Goodwin writing home. "Everyone, like me, had a wonderful time ... there was a continuous stream of visitors to the ship and invitations to various homes, parks, outings and zoos - and best of all, a visit to the athletic arena, swimming pool and Empire Village being built for next year's Empire Games." Now listen to what one of the local newspaper columnists had to say: "The best Public Relations Firm that Great Britain has ever had working for her ... the Royal Navy ... that was the image brought to me at Fremantle yesterday." These comments express the mood of the whole visit from the moment that the harbour pilot brought *Ark Royal* (the largest ship ever to enter Fremantle) alongside the North Wharf.



Open Ship

Nothing could deter the people of Western Australia from seeing over the ship. During the four-day period of official visiting, over 15,000 looked around; apart from the straightforward tour of the ship, during which the children swarmed everywhere, touched everything, turned every handle, pushed every knob, there was also a static display in one of the hangars which fascinated the visitors, although most of them were only too clearly *blinded with science*. There is little doubt though that the most popular exhibits (or were they exhibitors) were the two pet monkeys, Charlie and George, belonging to Able Seaman Harrison and Ordinary Seaman Glenton. After a few days their owners were tempted to state Interviews by Appointment Only, so persistent had the publicity become. Apart from television, radio and press reports, they were featured by one of Australia's leading cartoonists. One local lady, distressed to hear that the monkeys were unhappy at the moderate temperatures in Fremantle after the heat of Singapore, knitted Charlie a red woollen sweater.

Even the most formidable forecasts on the part of the meteorologists could not stem the tide of humanity that converged on the ship. Lashing rain

and high winds on one day convinced the local police that the attendance that afternoon would be poor, but two hours before the ship opened there were more than 2,000 people queueing to go round. The Fremantle traffic bridge was constantly jammed with cars travelling bumper to bumper - all headed for Wharf 8. At the peak period when there were about 4,000 people aboard, the gale-force wind succeeded first in loosening three bollards on the quay and then, finally, in parting nine 1½-in. diameter hawsers until the telephone line was practically the only connection with the shore and one wag observed: "It's up to the Post Office to get us back now." Eventually the ship was made fast again but there were some anxious moments.

The final words on what our *down-under* friends thought about these Cook's tours must lie with one of our youngest visitors who won a prize with her letter to the editor of the local paper. "... After waiting one hour in the rain we finally boarded the ship. . . . We climbed steep steps and a sailor was at each end to help the children. . . . We took photos of the planes, guns and two of the ship. I think it was worth while waiting in the rain and getting soaked because it was so interesting."