

HONG KONG

HMS TAMAR

The Naval Base (HMS *Tamar*) now consists of one corner of the old dockyard centred around the tidal basin. The dry dock has been filled in and is now the parade ground which apparently, even nowadays, one cannot do without in a naval establishment. The new naval base with its modern operational and administration block (housing the Commodore-in-Charge Hong Kong and his staff), and modern accommodation block, is perhaps, the most compact and tidy British naval base in the world.

Communications in Hong Kong consist of the naval CRR in Victoria Barracks, the Joint Services Transmitter Station (a naval agency on Stonecutters Island) and the MSO in HMS *Tamar*.

The naval CRR has had a much needed face lift and is now resplendent in formica topped bays and working benches. There is a completely modernised receiver outfit and a general re-organisation of the old bunch of knitting which went under the misnomer of 'wiring'. During this major upheaval the RSOW could be seen sitting under a tent-like contraption (designed to fend off flying debris) and surrounded by teleprinters and receivers, the majority of which were on the deck, but still working, thanks to lots of red flex and ginger string.

The re-organisation of the MSO and CRR reached a peak of chaos concurrently and the BCO (Lieut. Carter) was noted to be getting more grey each day. However we are now settled in efficient offices fit for human habitation and the BCO is slowly regaining his sanity. It is much to the credit and forbearance of the staff that during the work which went on over a 4 month period no circuits were closed down and not one signal was lost.

Joint Communications are very much to the forefront here. Although complete 'jointing-up' has not yet been achieved, much has been done towards this end. All three Services now use the same transmitter station (JSTS Stonecutters) and the reception of all long haul circuits is carried out by the Cable and Wireless receiver station on Mount Butler. As yet the Joint Comcen has not been opened but plans are at an advanced stage and it is hoped will be implemented in the not too distant future. The spirit of co-operation among the three Services is very good, particularly between the WRAC's in the Army Comcen and the staff of the Naval CRR.

We have had our fair share of visitors during the last few months. These included DNS, FCO & FCA FES. Each one managed to do the rounds of communications in Hong Kong and also managed to fit in some shopping.

A word of warning to all bachelors. If you want to remain so, don't come to Hong Kong. In the last six months four of the staff, RO2(G)'s Smith, Owen, Barrand and Thomas have married.

We are just about to lose CRS Vincent-Spall and wish him and his wife the very best of luck in the future. CRS(W) Strangeway has now taken the weight.

During the past 12 months Hong Kong has seen most of the ships of the fleet, who are always welcome. Although we have only a small staff and limited technical facilities we are always pleased to help out any ships in any way within our limited capabilities. Our condolences to ships who have had their visits cancelled at the last moment; better luck next time.