

CONFIDENTIAL

H.M.A.S. DERWENT,  
at Sea.  
3 August 1966.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS - JULY 1966  
(All times local)

Sir,

I have the honour to report the proceedings of Her Majesty's Australian Ship DERWENT for the month of July 1966.

2. On Friday 1 July DERWENT was on passage from her previous night patrol area off Kembung to the succeeding night patrol in the Singapore Strait between Johore Shoal Buoy and Horsburgh Light. At 0600 fuel was replenished from the RFA TIDEPOOL and at 0900 rendezvous was made with HMS BERWICK off Johore Shoal Buoy. During the remainder of the day DERWENT was consort for the sea inspection of BERWICK by Captain (D), First Escort Squadron and took part in a number of exercises which included a tow by BERWICK, who proceeded stern first. It was unfortunate that because of this commitment the ship's company were unable to attend the concert given by the Australian Forces Overseas Amenities Fund at Singapore Naval Base that evening.
3. On completion of BERWICK's inspection DERWENT carried out an UA8/9 calibration with HMS AJAX and on completion at 1930 set course for Hong Kong.
4. The passage to Hong Kong was without incident and DERWENT secured port side to the North Arm, Victoria Basin at 1020 on Tuesday 5 July. During the following eleven days the ship reached a high standard of cleanliness and repairs to 'L' turbo alternator were completed.
5. On Tuesday 12 July Storm Warning Signal 1 was hoisted in Hong Kong. At this stage it was assessed that Tropical Depression LOLA would pass some seventy miles to the south of the colony. At 2330 Storm Warning Signal 3 was hoisted and at 0615 the following day a meteorological briefing was held in the Operations Room HMS TAMAR. It appeared then that the harbour

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THE FLAG OFFICER COMMANDING,  
H.M. AUSTRALIAN FLEET.

(Copy to: The Commander, Far East Fleet.  
The Flag Officer, Second in Command,  
Far East Fleet.  
The Captain (F), First Frigate Squadron.  
The Captain (D), Tenth Destroyer Squadron.)

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would encounter winds up to about 40 kts as the depression passed to the south and as a precautionary measure notice for steam was reduced to two hours and later to immediate notice. The centre of LOLA eventually passed over Aberdeen on the southern side of Hong Kong Island at approximately 2115 on Wednesday 13 July. DERWENT remained alongside quite comfortably in winds which at the Royal Observatory, Hong Kong gusted to 75 kts. At 0410 the following morning all storm signals were cancelled.

6. DERWENT sailed from Hong Kong at 0800 on Saturday 16 July passing VAMPIRE, in bound, in the harbour. The ship was approximately one hundred and twenty miles north of Cam Ranh Bay on Sunday 17 July when the medical officer reported a patient with suspected acute appendicitis. The patient was treated conservatively with anti-biotics in the hope that an operation could be postponed until the ship arrived in Singapore forty eight hours later, but as a precautionary measure the Commander, Far East Fleet, was asked to make arrangements with the United States Navy for reception of the patient at Cam Ranh Bay in case an operation should be required that night. The response of the Commander, United States Seventh Fleet was immediate and widespread as he alerted each unit of Task Force Seventy Seven as well as the Commander, Naval Forces Vietnam. USS INTREPID was nominated by the Commander Seventh Fleet as the ship in the best position to rendezvous with DERWENT, but in the event an immediate operation was not required and the patient was landed safely at Singapore Naval Base.

7. The ship secured starboard side to Number 8 Berth, Singapore Naval Dockyard at 1330 on Tuesday 19 July 1966 having carried out an LRX that morning in the Singapore exercise areas. Personnel of the PTA unit and four practice seacat missiles were embarked and on completion of fuelling DERWENT cast off at 0700 and proceeded to sea.

8. At 0630 on Wednesday 20 July rendezvous was made with HM Tug NIMBLE for transfer of PTA gear and personnel. Two tracking runs and three firing runs had been programmed and only two extra runs were required to establish a suitable height at which the PTA would be clear of cloud. Three missiles were fired, all of which passed close to the target. During the afternoon an AALRF against a PTA was carried out but the results were rather disappointing.

9. At 1750 on Wednesday 20 July while returning to Singapore Strait for patrol duties, DERWENT was ordered to Telok Tekek on Pu. Tioman to embark a sailor from HMS SHERATON who was suffering from acute appendicitis. DERWENT arrived off Telok Tekek at 2130 and having embarked the sailor returned to her patrol area at 0220 on Thursday 21 July. The sailor was landed at Loyang Jetty at 0715.

10. DERWENT made rendezvous with the RFA TIDEPOOL at 0900 on Thursday 21 July and on completion of fuelling proceeded to Malacca Strait where deterrent patrols were

.... / carried out

13. At 0725 on Monday 20 June DERWENT cast off and proceeded to the explosive anchorage off RNAD Singapore. During the forenoon RN ammunition which had been embarked from RFA FORT LANGLEY during exercise SEA IMP was exchanged with RAN stocks held in Singapore. DERWENT weighed anchor and proceeded to sea at 1030. A two hour aircraft tracking exercise commenced on clearing Horsburgh Light.
14. DERWENT carried out Singapore Strait patrol from Johore Shoal Buoy to Horsburgh Light each night from Monday 20 June to Thursday 23 June. All patrols were without incident with the exception that a burst of small arms fire across the bows was necessary to stop an unlit barter trader at 0538 on 22 June. This boat was later allowed to proceed.
15. On Tuesday 21 June DERWENT took part in Exercise Angle Iron. This exercise was designed to test the efficiency of the air defences of Singapore against a predominantly low level air threat. The ship anchored 30 miles east of Jason's Bay and acted as a radar picket. The enemy consisted of Meteor, Hunter, Canberra and Vulcan aircraft. An RAF officer was embarked and controlled CAP aircraft allocated to DERWENT. This proved a most valuable exercise as it was the first joint air defence exercise DERWENT had taken part in for 18 months.
16. DERWENT stood by HM Submarine AMPHION while she carried out sea trials on Wednesday 22 June. An LRF followed by two AALRF and a live mortar firing were carried out the following day.
17. At 0730 on Friday 24 June DERWENT anchored off Loyang and fuelled from a lighter from Singapore Naval Base. The ship weighed anchor at 0925 and proceeded to Malacca Strait where deterrent patrols were carried out in accordance with FOTI 4104 Annex 'A'. Patrols were as follows:-
 

KEMBONG	-	nights 24/25 and 29/30
MABROK	-	nights 25/26 and 28/29
ARCA ISLANDS	-	night 26/27
BERHALA ISLANDS	-	night 27/28.
- With the exception of the evening of 29 June when DERWENT encountered what appeared to be two Raum Boats while patrolling off Kembung all patrols were without incident. The ship anchored off Port Dickson on 26 June and 29 June to collect and land mail.
18. On Tuesday 28 June DERWENT made rendezvous with RFA TIDEFLOW to the northwest of One Fathom Bank to refuel and for the first time ever, two hoses were taken. Despite the different distances between TIDEFLOW's derricks and DERWENT's fuelling positions the arrangements were quite satisfactory - although a defective coupling at the after position leaked after sixty tons of fuel had been passed, and sprayed oil over the quarterdeck and mortar well.
19. On Thursday 30 June DERWENT returned to Singapore Strait where a patrol was carried out between Johore Shoal Buoy and Horsburgh Light that night. During the passage down Malacca Strait an Indonesian BT boat was seen alongside two small sampans in international waters. There have been

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instances of BT boats stealing Malaysian fishing craft so DERWENT circled the BT boat for approximately twenty minutes at a range of five hundred yards before proceeding. By this time it had been established that the sampans were Indonesian.

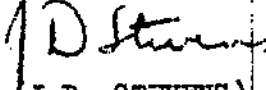
20. Information that DERWENT's past service in Borneo waters qualified her personnel for Repatriation Benefits, and particularly War Service Homes, was received on board most favourably.

21. The health, conduct and morale of the ship's company is satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

  
(J.D. STEVENS)  
COMMANDER R.A.N.  
CAPTAIN

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