

RN Tiger Moth HMS Eagle '64



News from B.R.N.C. Dartmouth

I THINK it is generally agreed by all who have passed through Dartmouth that there are facilities for doing almost anything (literally) and if facilities are not available, then they can be arranged. For those interested in flying, one of the most pressing of these study-destroying activities is the Britannia Flying Club.

The "raison d'être" of this club are six Tiger Moths which the College runs at Plymouth airport — about an hour's drive from Dartmouth. These aircraft are used mainly to give the Supplementary List Cadets (Air) some air experience before they commence their flying training. On weekends and Wednesday afternoons (a make and mend over here) however, they and the

instructors are available for recreational flying. This is to give all those general list officers under training a chance to further any interest in aviation they might have. If one is keen enough and is prepared to go flying regularly, it is quite possible to get a Private Pilot's Licence. This year three Australians; S/Lt. Craig, S/Lt. Hazell and S/Lt. Salmon achieved that end.

The Tiger Moths made history in a small way in early June by deck landing on *H.M.S. EAGLE*. She had just come out of refit and was steaming up and down the Channel doing trials without her squadrons and so it was decided to take advantage of this ready made airfield. On 20th June and again on 1st July, with *EAGLE*

http://www.navy.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/RANC_Magazine_1964.pdf

ten miles south of Star Point, three Tigers did a series of touch and goes and finally landed. With 15 kts. of wind over the deck, the aircraft stopped rolling almost on top of the forward lift by means of which they were struck down into the hangar to provide a clear deck for the next aircraft. We used the actual deck, not the angle, and did not use arrestor wires as our landing speed was a genteel 45 kts., besides which they would have torn the tail out of the aircraft!

The group that landed on the 20th June were the first fixed wing aircraft to land on her since the ship was recommissioned and they duly received the traditional bottle of "champers". The aircraft were piloted by (P) Officers on the College staff with Sub Lieutenants in the back seats as second pilots. S/Lt. Craig and S/Lt. Hazell took part in this death defying operation.

During the summer leave a Flying Camp is held from Plymouth to the south of France and back. This year we are going down the West coast, cutting across and finishing up in Cannes for three days, and then back by more or less the same route. The whole trip is to take thirteen days. The Australian flag is once again kept

flying by Craig, Hazell and Salmon. As I write this there are six days until "GO TIME" and we are still trying to work out how to stow gear for a fortnight into half a 'pussers' overnight bag; the stowage space in a Tiger is rather limited to say the least of it. Needless to say we are all looking forward to the trip immensely.

Flying has even become an inter divisional sport and a cross coutry competition is held for the Toulouse Trophy. There is also a cup for the best aviator Officer under training in the College. Both of these, although I blush to say it, were won by S/Lt. Craig.

If anyone has an interest in aviation, Dartmouth is certainly the place to foster it. We found that any gliding experience was a great help in attaining the standard required for a "first solo". The Flying Club is an excellent way of getting around the countryside and visiting such places as Exeter, Bristol, Land's End and the Isles of Scilly. Lastly, and I suppose far from least, once one has gone solo it is an excellent means of avoiding Sunday Divisions!

—A.H.C.