

SEPTEMBER 1942

Tuesday 1

Cold & windy to-day.
Did our usual route
march this morning.
Had a couple of lectures(?)
this morning.

This afternoon was taken
up by a mock invasion
of Victoria. The sqdn
was divided into 3 groups -
attackers defenders &
control. We were in control.
but spent the time writing
letters. Closed camp
to-night - wrote a few
more letters.

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Wednesday 2 €

Arose 6.45. After
the route marche we
drew tin hats, water-
bottles etc & marked
our blankets & other
equipment.

Had a talk this afternoon
by CO on ship board
discipline etc. Were
paid £6-8-6 to-day.

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Thursday 3

Arose 6.45. mucked about
no route march this
morning. Had dinner
at 11.0 clock & then this
afternoon marched down
to Flemington Race
Course where we had
a church service - 3rd
anniversary of commence-
ment of war. Had
leave from 3.0. Went
in to town with boys -
finished up at the
WAAF's dance.

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Friday 4

Arose 6.45 - did
nothing all day.
Had a parade this afternoon
for an Air Commodore -
then a church parade.
We were then paid - £12.00.
I converted all my
money into dollars -
£31-5 came out to \$100.

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Saturday 5

Went down to the docks to-day & spent the morning washing out our billets & scrubbing down mess tables.

Went in to town this afternoon and took a few photos - Shrine of Remembrance etc.

Went to see Swamp Water with + Date with the falcon. Gay Roberts - fWAA7 from Belmore - Sydney came with us. We arrived home about 12.0 midnight.

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14th after
Trinity

Sunday 6

Arose at 8.30 - didn't bother about breakfast. Went to Mess & washed a shirt. We had leave from 1300 hrs yesterday till 1400 to-day. Had a parade at 14.00 & were given leave till to-morrow morning. We expected to sail to day. So 3 of us had a look round the Botanic gardens - estimating beauty of girls by allotting them points - 10 full points.

Geoff & I went to a concert in the Melbourne Hall tonight

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Monday 7

Arose at 7.10 - had breakfast.
On parade we were told
to be dressed in Blues &
have kit bags out on
parade ground within 10 hr.
We were paid - 2 days
pay. - then we emptied
our palliasses & returned
then. Hoddmines & were
taken by bus to Port
Melbourne where we
came on board. We
~~sailed~~ sailed down the
Yarra - ^{and} where we stopped
in the bay just on danks.

Ship is a cargo ship ^{passing} about
SEPTEMBER 1942
we are bunked ~ No hotel under
aft well deck.

Tuesday 8

Settling down to ship board
life. Very little to do but
read. 16 members taken for
gun crew. We circled around
in Pt Phillip Bay till about
mid-day & then set course
S. Passed through heads
about 5.0 pm. Only salt
water for washing - ^{shove}
~~once~~ ^{once} a week - fresh water
is rationed. We are
sleeping in bunks - three
high. Turned in about 10 pm.
Had 'abandon ship' drill to day

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course S.W. lost night.

Wednesday 9

1st day at sea - heading S - generally. Fine & warm - stratus clouds this afternoon. Still very calm.

We have to carry our lifebelts with us always - wherever we go.

Spent the day lying about reading.

Feeling a bit off this afternoon.

They collected our cameras to-day.

We sleep fully dressed at night.

Poelau Lami. SEPTEMBER 1942

Thursday 10

2nd day at sea. 37 flight were duty flight to-day. Heading S. till about mid-day and then we headed E. We have to advance our watches 25 mins to-night which means we should be about 156° E Long.

Not feeling very well to-day.

Much colder to-day - we are putting on extra underclothes & sweaters. We have 2 civvies in with us - they paid £120 for the passage.

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Friday 11

3rd day at sea. We commenced lectures to-day - 4 periods of 1 hr each. 2 of the apts are sick so I took charge of 5 Flight. We stopped for an hour after dinner to-day - engine trouble I believe. We have to advance our clocks another 32 min to-night - should bring us about long 165° E. Cloudy to-day - raining a bit. There was a engine party to-night. Talked to an American staff Sgt for 2 hours tonight.

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Saturday 12

4th day at sea. Lectures again to-day. - I attended only one. We are running S. with strong westerly wind blowing - hence she rolled a lot - made us feel off colour again. Have to advance our watches by 25 mins at 4 am tomorrow morning. Very cold - mittens, balaclava & sheep skin vests in evidence. Wearing 1st underwear, pyjama shirt & sweaters & overalls. Albatrosses follow ship all day.

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15th after
Trinity

Sunday 13

5th day at sea. Had a shore this morning for the first time since I came on board. Had Rosary

& Litany this morning - Sister Kelly did the honours.

We saw a couple of whales blowing today.

Sea is much smoother - wind has dropped - it is not nearly so cold.

By 4 am to-morrow morning we should be about 178° E. -

^{are to} we advanced our watches another 30 mins.

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6th Day at sea

Monday 14

Fine with cool wind blowing. Had quite a talk with Leo Kearny up on deck to-night. Advanced our watches another 28 mins.

Mon 14

7th day at sea. - We crossed International Date line - hence two Mondays. Calculated we are about Lat 43° S Long 170° W - we advanced our watches 21 mins tonight. We sleep with life jacket, panic belt & water bottle for a pillow.

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Tuesday 15

8th day at sea.

Windy & slightly rough -
was sick this morning
so I went to bed for the day.
We advanced our
watches 20 mins to night.
we are heading roughly NE.

Spray was breaking
over the ship.

No birds following ship.

Did Wild Life take photos of
abo trees. SEPTEMBER 1942

Wednesday 16

9th day at sea.

Raining heavily this
morning. 16 of us were
transferred to ~~the~~ + 5 flights
to assist them on duty
day.

I was sick again
to-day - spent most of
the day in bed. Had
a shave to-night after
a couple of hours at
500.

SEPTEMBER 1942 with her.

Too much joy in the camp.

Thursday 17

10th day at sea.

Fine & warm - we had the afternoon off to enjoy the sun & air our blankets.

The R.A. 7 boys put on a concert to-night but we played 500 instead.

We advanced our watches 20 mins to-night & calculate to-day that our position is $30^{\circ}S$ $157^{\circ}W$.

Boys are buying 500 Crocker A for \$2.50 about 15/6 - from canteen - they have sold everything but cigarettes.

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To Elaine, learning piano?
Reading Books from home
Reader's Digest.
Didn't go to Capetown.

Friday 18

11th Day at sea.

Quite calm and mostly warm. Lectures as usual. We probably crossed the tropic of Capricorn to-day. The water is the bluest blue I have ever seen - it is a beautiful colour. Added on only 5 mins to-night - we are

heading slightly W of N. Sat out on deck in the moonlight for a while. Thought of Elaine & read her last letter.

20 ~~Valley~~ ~~SEPTEMBER 1942~~ ~~Billy Rath~~
- passed near Marquesas
Saturday 19

12th Day at sea.

Very windy - but quite warm out of the wind. 3 flight were duty flight - so we - attached to 4 flight had the day off - & just lay on the deck all day. We advanced our watches 2 mins to night. We were slightly sunburned. It is ~~very~~ hot & extremely stuffy in the holds - sleeping quarters. We sleep on top of blankets in shorts only

~~shorts & shirts official~~
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dress from to-day.
16th after Trinity Sunday 20

13th day at sea.

Very windy to-day - but quite warm. Very warm between decks. 4 flight was duty flight to-day. I was sick - had tea to-night - first meal since breakfast yesterday morning. We did not advance our watches at all to-night. I slept up on the promenade deck - very windy.

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Monday 21

14th Day at Sea
Very windy to-day - sea quite rough. We had about 4 showers throughout the day - clear sky then in a couple of minutes rain would commence. Some of the boys saw a couple of flying fish to-day. We had a stand down day to-day on account of working yesterday. I have been having an onion sandwich each meal the last few days - onions scrounged from kitchen - fresh bread - very nice.
Clocks advanced 14 mins

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Tuesday 22

How is flowering gum planted on clay plot
advanced our watches
15th Day at Sea ^{12 min} tonight
Moon was directly overhead last night
Only salt water is available for washing - so we tried to use the showers of rain that fell yesterday - unfortunately they did not last long enough.
Calculated our position as Lat $70^{\circ}S$ Long $150^{\circ}W$. at noon
Quite warm to-day - but not extra hot - cloudy. Lectures were suspended today. This afternoon for inter-flight sports - tug-of-war, deck quoits, peg quoits, draughts, chess etc. Played cards with Tony Smith - from Bedgeralong - near Parkes N.S.W. - knows Bryde Cook - who boards with his people. She is teaching school at Carrolllin and Dick Lloyd from Forbes - they are mates - ship near us in the hold. We have been posting.

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16th day at sea.

Wednesday 23

armed guards around the ship last night to night - there are ~~some~~ rumours that the crew have been showing lights on deck after dark. Warm - but not as hot as at Narromine during summer time. I calculated that we crossed the equator this afternoon. We saw many flying fish to-day we also saw a school of fish leaping out of the water - might have been dolphins - they were a fair way off. Slept out last night & again to night - moon is almost full - it is beautiful on deck at night. The sea is as calm as Sydney Harbour at its calmest. Did some sunbathing - advanced our watches 15 minutes.

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17th day at sea.

Thursday 24 ☺

We were told we could have our cameras to photograph the King Neptune ceremony this afternoon however Major Melford said there was a crowd of wild Australian outlaws concealing around the ship photographing everything so we had to hand back our cameras. The ~~main~~ salvage crew rigged up a bath yesterday afternoon. The ceremony commenced at 2 pm - the salvage crew were all dressed up as King Neptune etc. F.Lt. Edward & our M.O. were the first to be done. I got my camera out and took 30 photos this afternoon. Then some excitement - far on the horizon - about 1 hr before sunset we could see the masts of another ship - however it gradually disappeared - the only connection with civilization ~~who~~ we have seen since we left Melbourne. Dick Troy developed 6 films on deck to-night before the moon rose. Watches advanced 14 mins

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18th day at sea

Friday 25

Only 1 camera per flight was allowed yesterday - so I ~~was~~ was appointed official photographer for Flight 3. The moon shining through cirrus clouds last night made a rainbow of a complete circle. We took our beds up on deck but about 1.30 am down came the rain, so we came below.

Four flight are duty flight to-day. Jeff & I were water guards & then had to clean out fore & aft lavatories. Then we had to break up all the wooden boxes with the garbage & burn them. However the stove wouldn't work so we had to leave them. We have been doing some sun basking each day - about half an hour is quite enough to make the skin red. We are getting quite lazy sitting about doing nothing. I have worn out the seat of a pair of underpants. We advanced our watches 13 minutes to-night.

Aloha - my love to you

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19th day at sea.

Saturday 26

Rained last night so we could not sleep on deck - it was like an oven below - we slept on top of our beds in shorts only. It was still raining this morning but fined up later. We had heats for inter-flight sports till 11.0 am. Someone lost their hat overboard. The sea was extremely flat this morning - there was no swell at all & hardly a ripple - just like a tank. The M.O. gave us a talk on what not to do when we land in Frisco - beware of confidence men and bad women.

According to our navigation we have about 5 more days to go. It is quite fine to-night so we will probably be sleeping on deck. Southern Cross is no longer visible. The furthest north that it can be seen in lowest position is $29^{\circ}S$ - according to one of the seamen. ^{watches} 3 min

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20th Day at sea.

17th after
Trinity

Sunday 27

Very warm & a good breeze blowing. We shaved & cleaned sand shoes for parade this morning. Sister Kelly said rosary with us this morning. Sat reading ^{for rest of} ~~the~~ morning - repacked my small kit bag ^{included} ~~this morning~~ ^{or books} ~~packed~~ two of my blankets. We saw a bird to-day - the first for over a week. Advanced our watches 1 min to-night. Several of us had an argument for about 1 1/2 hrs to-night. We are
26th RAAF Canadian draft.

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21st day at sea

Monday 28

not quite so warm - but still fairly hot. I calculate that we cross the tropic of Cancer to-day. We had an air-rec exam this morning. I got 27 right out of 30 - that is with a bit of help. We had this afternoon off - so we played quito & I packed my sea kit bag. There was great excitement about 5 pm - the gun crew were given "General Quarters - at the double" and the general alarm was sounded. We ran up on deck - and found that the ship was zig-zagging. Some of the boys claimed they saw the wake of a sub or a torpedo across our wake - others said they saw the periscope. We continued changing course till after sunset. Dick Troy & I developed some films on deck to-night.

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22nd day at sea

Michaelmas Tuesday 29

Fine and warm.

We played quoits and read all the morning. We were told to-day that we could use fresh water to wash our clothes to-day.

This afternoon we had the finals of inter-flight sports.

Geoff Blackmore, Phil Croft & myself represented the flight in peg quoits. Advanced our watches 12 mins.

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23rd day at sea.

Wednesday 30

Clare's Birthday 5th

Arose at 5.30 am and went down to the kitchen - washing out boilers - porridge & custard, scrubbing down the floor, washing out utensils and dishing out meals. There was a lot of work in the kitchen to-day in preparation for the dinner to-night. Whilst down in the store room I got hold of a few tins of corn, a tin of sausages and a large tin of olives.

We had a farewell dinner to-night - The Captain & officers, sister Kelly, Major McGeer & the salvage crew were all present.

Then when it was all over we had to start and wash up. We finished about 12.15 - after which we had a bath in fresh water and then went to bed.

advanced our watches 20 mins