



## ROYAL NAVAL COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN HONG KONG

by CCY Sackfield

To avoid ambiguity this article should really be entitled "Chinese Relations" because too many people think that the job entails looking after the European Community only.

The job usually involves begging, borrowing and extracting equipment from people who are reluctant to part with it and also coercing labourers and technicians from First Lieutenants who can "Never spare the hands".

The C.R. areas are split up between the three Services. The Royal Navy are responsible for the outlying areas which cannot be reached by road and the numerous small islands to the North and East (see map). We work closely with two New Territories Districts AAI PO and Sai Kung. The system employed for selecting suitable C.R. projects stems from a quarterly meeting held in one or other of the two District offices. The D.O. supplies us with a list of possible projects which are in turn distributed to the H.K. Squadron. Also, when a ship will be in a certain area for a period of time the District Officers are

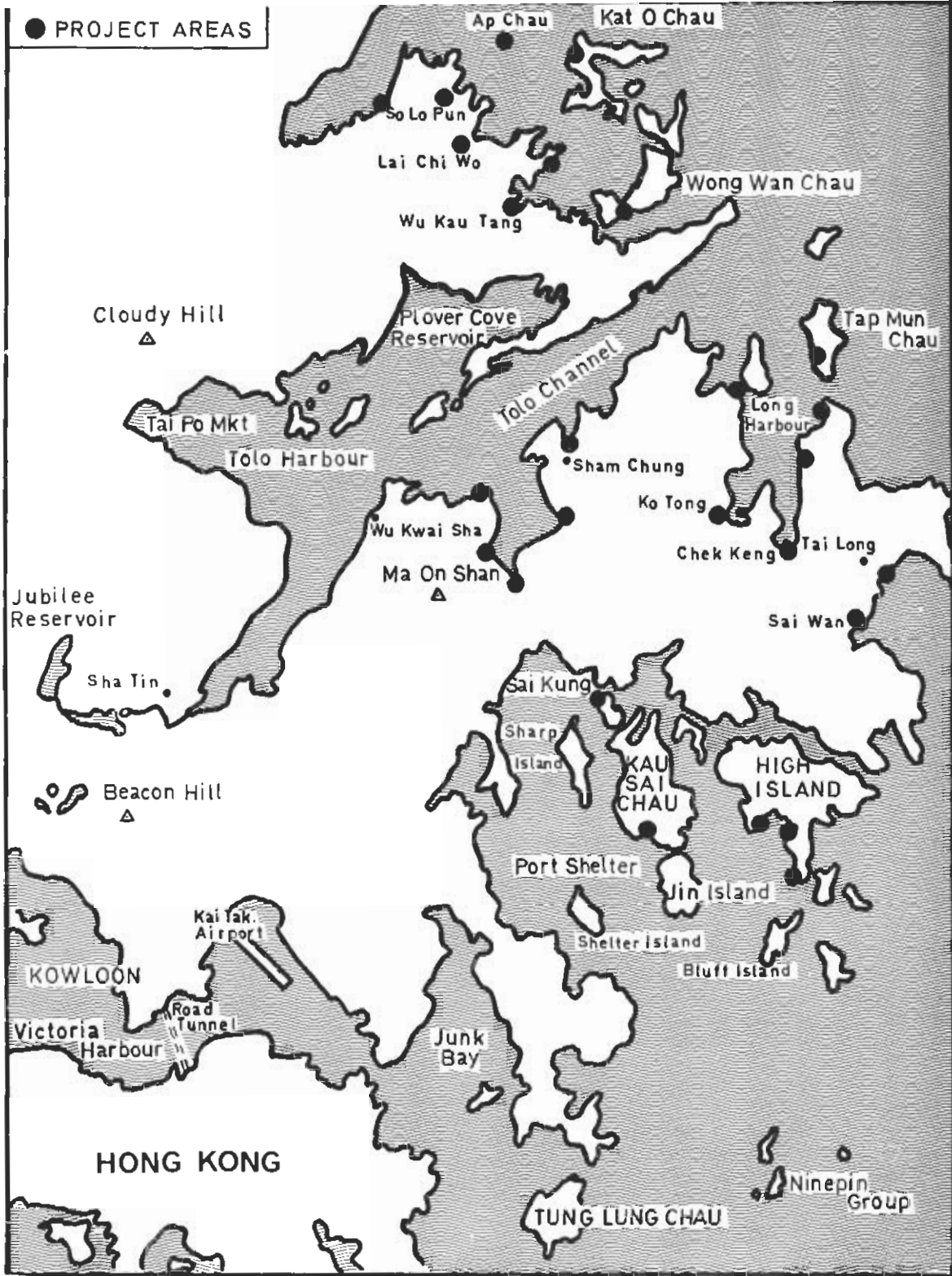
asked what projects are suitable and available at the time, if any, they are then programmed and organised from Tamar. Visiting ships also volunteer for C.R. projects during their stay in Hong Kong.

The C.R. projects undertaken are numerous and range from building bridges to blowing them up. Installing generators and engines in villages without power supplies, making childrens playgrounds, rewiring villages and many more. A total of 18 projects were undertaken during 1975, and already in 1976 we have four projects underway.

Whilst on deployment, HMS *Lowestoft* wired completely a village school, installed a diesel generator and supplied the school with lights and fans -- a luxury for a small island school. The project lasted eight days during which time the team ate, slept and worked in the school rooms.

A more recent project nearer to home (for Communicators that is) was carried out by the RNCC and MSO *Tamar* at a remote village on the Sai Kung penninsular at Sai Wan. The project entailed the repairing of a foot bridge which separated the village and the clearing of the

● PROJECT AREAS



beaches. This project could not have been carried out without the help of the RAF and the Army. The first party of two, with stores and tentage, were dropped in by Wessex, stationed at Kai Tak, onto the village recreation area. The remainder were driven through the New Territories to the foothills by Land Rover and then trekked the 2½ miles by footpath to the village. Once the camp was established the Army supplied an LCT to take in the cement and tools and of course a little light refreshment to the order of 350 cases of "San Mig". The LCT skipper thought the Royal Navy were building a permanent base there! The camp was kept going for almost three weeks with personnel change overs as watch-keeping at the RNCC allowed. During this period 2 tons of rubbish was disposed of, mostly by burning.

The project was a great success and very much appreciated by both the villagers and the Government District Office. It was also enjoyed by all the people who took part, making a change from the noisy concrete jungle of H.K. Island to the absolute peace and tranquility of such a remote village.

At the moment a similar project is being organised for the victually members of *Tamar* on the island of KAT 'O'.

The patrol craft of the Hong Kong Squadron try to get in as much CR as possible when their patrols allow -- so all in all life is pretty hectic, ordering rolls of cable, electrical switches, spare parts and ball bearings for clapped out generators which are usually rebuilt and repaired by the workshops of *HMS Tamar*. These items normally arrive by RAF helos from the remote villages. Many hours are spent travelling by Land Rover and Sampan to distant villages to make a survey of the next project to be undertaken and to assess the amount of materials required. What a pity I did not do a PJT for Electrical Fitter and building quantity supply before starting the job. Still, when the generators are started and the lights come on we know the effort has not been wasted.

Here is a list of projects that were undertaken in 1975:

1. Generator repaired. Safety fence built along cliff path at Tung Am -- *HMS Wolverton*.
2. Generator installed with engine at Sai Lau Kong -- *HMS Tamar*.
3. Renew wiring of village houses at Sai Lau Kong -- *HMS Chichester*.
4. Engine and generator dismantled at AP Chau -- *HMS Chichester*.

5. Repair of village refrigerator at Tung Am -- *HMS Wolverton*.
6. Clearance of land slide at Pak Am -- *HMS Mermaid*.
7. Check of generators at Sai Lau Kong, Wong Wan and Ghek Keng -- *HMS Chichester*.
8. Installed generator and wired up school at Yim Tin Tsai -- *HMS Lowestoft*.
9. Check undersea water pipe at Kat 'C' -- *HMS Chichester*.
10. Flush through water pipes and clean dams to Kato water supply -- *HMS Chichester*.
11. Repair of generator at Chek Keng -- *HMS Monkton and Yarnton*.
12. Repair of footbridge footings at Pak Ah -- *HMS Wasperton*.
13. Repair of footbridge and clear beaches at Sai Wan -- RNCC and *HMS Tamar*.
14. Concreting overflow drain -- approx 60 feet long by 5 feet deep with volunteers from *HMS Chichester, Tamar and Yarnton*.
15. Clear space for childrens playground at Sai Kung Town -- *HMS Chichester*.
16. Supplies second hand diesel engine and repaired generator to supply power to the island of Ap Chau -- *HMS Tamar*.
17. Repairs to footbridge at Pak Lap -- *HMS Wolverton*.
18. Erection of goal posts at Pak Ah for school football pitch - *HMS Wasperton*.
19. Engine and generator removed from Sai Wan village -- RNCC and MSO *Tamar*.



"I'M NOT VERY GOOD AT THIS MENTAL TELEGRAPHY..."