

undertaken with a forecast of ten or more knots of headwind. We were delayed several days waiting favorable winds and finally headed west from San Diego on Jan. 11, 1954. The take-off run was seemingly endless, and I think we headed west still below the level of the Point Loma Lighthouse. My log shows the flight having a duration of 15.3 hours, and I know we didn't stray from our course, being the navigator. Cdr. Kellam didn't start the APU until we were on the water, not wanting to divert fuel from the engines at that point. Nevertheless, we arrived at Ford Island where Kellam, as an Ensign, had been on Dec. 7, 1941.

I believe Crew 2 had an engine failure on climb-out and had to return to North Island. The rest of the aircraft all made it safely to Ford island. We departed Ford island on the 14th, headed for Kwajelein, but, due to an overly long low level climb-out, consumed too much fuel early on and decided to stop at Johnston Island and refuel. This we did and continued the next day, and then on to Guam, and then to Sangley Point, arriving Jan. 19, 1954. VP-6 was there awaiting our arrival so they could return from deployment to Barber's Point. The rest of the squadron arrived in due time, however, I seem to remember that Kapranos' plane experienced grievous problems in Hawaii and could not continue. It was several weeks before the problems were solved or a replacement plane was provided, so his crew was very late in arriving at Sangley.

Once established, we started the patrols. I can't tell from the log book which were which, but we had a night trip up and down the Formosa Strait, a day trip to the Pescadores Islands with the return the next day, a day trip to Okinawa with a return the next day, and three daily South China Sea patrols. In February of 1954 Crew 1 and another participated in a Joint Exercise with the Dutch and British wherein we flew between Labuan, Borneo, and a French seaplane base called Cat Lai, French Indo-China for three days. Crew 1 took liberty in Saigon on February 21, going from Cat Lai to Saigon during daylight in a bus and returning that night in a motor launch with armed riflemen fore and aft to guard against a Viet Minh attack. The French Foreign Legion was still in Indo-China at that time.

We spent R&R in Hong Kong wherein two crews flew into Hong Kong; one went ashore and the other returned the plane to Sangley. Steve Loo was our guide and constant companion while there. We stayed in the Grand Hotel in Kowloon and took tours everywhere - Victoria Peak, Floating Restaurants at Aberdeen, Repulse Bay, Tiger Balm Gardens, Mohan's, and through downtown Hong Kong and Kowloon. We even ended up at a police station in Kowloon to testify in behalf of our cab driver who had been involved in an accident with us on board. Incidentally, we saw quite clearly why the British were gradually losing their empire. A Brit was the main man at the police station with all others being native. The Brit showed nothing but total disdain toward his subordinates, the accused, and ourselves.

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