



Navy Command

**HMS DARING
BFPO 270**

Mr Callum Sillars
DARING Yachts
c/o Royal Yacht Club
The Parade
COWES
Isle of Wight
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27 February 2014

Dear Callum,

HMS DARING AFFILIATES UPDATE – FEBRUARY 2014

Welcome to the last of our update letters which brings to a conclusion the activities of HMS DARING as we end our 9 month deployment, circumnavigating the Globe.

When I wrote last, we had just spent the festive period alongside in Singapore. This brought a period of rest for the crew of DARING and an opportunity for personnel to fly families out to this wonderful region.

The first port visit following the Christmas stand down was the city of Sattahip, Thailand. Sattahip is the main naval base for the Royal Thai Navy and HMS Daring is not only the first Type 45 to visit Thailand but also the first RN warship to Visit Sattahip in over 22 years. The main purpose of the visit was to continue our wider regional engagement within the region and we hosted a number of defence contractors onboard during a Defence and Security Industry Day as well as the First Sea Lord, promoting products used by the UK Military and our suppliers to members of the Thai Government and Military.



National Children's Day, a Thai Public Holiday occurred whilst we were alongside and the naval base was open to visitors and had many events and attractions one of which was HMS Daring. We were overwhelmed by the levels of interest and provided guided ship's tours for approximately 1000 adults and children over the course of 4 hours. Unfortunately many more were unable to come onboard due to the high demand and limited time for tours.

The Ship's football team were able to play against the local Royal Thai Navy team and achieved a satisfying 2-1 win. The visit also gave many members of the ship's company a chance to enjoy the tourist and cultural aspects of a visit to Thailand. Many personnel were able to venture to nearby Pattaya with some venturing further afield with a number visiting Bangkok – a 4 hour drive away.

After steaming just over 1000 nautical miles in four days to our next Port visit in Jakarta, Indonesia, we embarked the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir George Zambellas for his final visit to HMS DARING. He arrived using our helicopter and witnessed DARING coming alongside in the wake of a tropical deluge that had seen 30cm of rain drop in a single night. The ship was given a warm welcome and 25 members of the Ship's Company were fortunate enough to witness the welcoming ceremony on the jetty, which included some traditional dancing. Unfortunately the weather was not on our side and due to monsoon season there were severe floods in the area preventing the anticipated turn out at our Defence and



Security Industry Day.

The weather did not stop our football team from stepping ashore to attempt to play a match on a badly waterlogged pitch, the conditions were not ideal but DARING continued their winning streak even against the elements. The Ship's Company were entertained throughout our stay by the Indonesian Navy and the weather certainly did not dampen the spirits when we participated in a cooking competition on the jetty which ended in a draw. The event culminated in a buffet lunch and a performance by a local Beatles tribute band called G Pluck, some singing from our own band was well received.



Sadly after another whistle stop visit it was time to depart and make our way towards Malaysia. Our time in Jakarta may have been short but was extremely memorable due to the hospitality shown by the Indonesian Navy who we sailed in company with when we departed.

Our final visit in the Far East was to Port Klang, in Malaysia, not far from Kuala Lumpur. A short visit of only 2 days however we managed to fit in an evening reception and showed some 240 school children and Naval cadets around the ship as well as managing to get ashore and sample the delights of 'KL'. The ship's rugby team took on a local team and, although they unfortunately lost the game, they were extremely well hosted to make up for their disappointment. However, the football team were more successful against the Royal Malaysian Navy, registering a win in their final game of the deployment. Although only a short visit, 'KL' was highly enjoyed by the ship's company and a very fine way to bring the Far Eastern element of our deployment to an end.

On sailing we re-entered the Malacca Strait to begin heading West, a real marker for the Ship's Company as we began to head towards home.

The Maldives was a pleasant, if unexpected, four day stop on our journey back across the Indian Ocean. Initially we were due to visit Cochin, India but for logistical reasons the visit was rearranged first to Diego Garcia and then finally to the Maldives. We anchored a short distance off the island capital of Malé and used a liberty boat to take personnel ashore to enjoy the beaches and crystal clear water the Maldives has to offer. It was a low key stop which was greatly enjoyed by all and which provided some nice rest and relaxation after a busy 2 months in the Far East and South East Asia and prior to our enhanced operational posture for transiting the Gulf of Oman towards Suez.



Next was Valetta, Malta. This was a welcome stop after a long period at sea from the Maldives, through the Suez Canal and west through the Mediterranean before arriving on 17 February. The Ship enjoyed a central berth in the iconic Grand Harbour and received the fine Maltese welcome that the RN is so used to in this Mediterranean oasis. Daring played host to an Evening Reception for local dignitaries, and welcomed numerous tours from the Maltese Sea Cadets Naval Enthusiasts and the George Cross Island Association. Whilst alongside the ship was lucky enough to have a CSE show (music, comedians and variety acts) at a local hotel which was enjoyed by all. Daring sailed on 20 February heading for the final Port Visit of Gibraltar.



The final stop before our return to the UK was that British Naval sanctuary of Gibraltar. 'Gib' proved to be a quick overnight stop to take on fuel and collect select family members of the Ship's

company who would join us for the 4 day passage to Portsmouth in order to experience naval life at sea. The sailors partook in all the usual recreational facilities that Gibraltar has to offer including significantly buoying up the economy through duty free sales and competing in the official rock run amongst the monkeys at 0630 the next morning.

The ship is now preparing to travel along the final stretch of this ground breaking and memorable deployment; the South West Approaches and the passage along the English Channel. Our final night at sea we will be anchored just off the Isle of Wight. We are all looking forward to being back with friends and families and the prospect of a well deserved period of leave before the ship and crew embark on the regeneration prior to the next deployment in 2015. We would like to again thank you for your very generous recent donation to our Ship's fund. Upon our return, our Navigating Officer, Lieutenant Daley Snell, will be in contact to discuss a potential visit to the Isle of Wight and possible ideas as to how we can integrate in the near future. The next time that you will receive a letter from the Commanding Officer of HMS DARING it will be from Cdr Philip Dennis MBE who will take his place at the helm in May of this year. It has been a wonderful experience to be the Commanding Officer on the first global deployment of a Type 45 Destroyer and I hope that you have enjoyed receiving our updates as much as I have enjoyed writing them.



Yours sincerely

A N P Essenhigh
Commander Royal Navy
Commanding Officer