RIGHT Jnternatrona/, 26 March 1977 769

Dear Uncle Roger . . .
Uncle Roger's picture of a "Sea Hornet" on a "bridge" at Seletar (S&L, February
12) whistled up a storm of correspondence, not all of it unanimous, about lighters,
jetties and aeroplane aesthetics:

Seletar by lighter for assembly at 390
MU. The old Sunderland handling
area between the jetty and the MUs
made the rest easy.
87 Commonfield Rd, LEN BOWEN Barnstead, Surrey

. . . The Sea Hornets were probably being transferred ashore from a carrier in the naval dockyard. The method was also used when replace-ment aircraft arived after shipping to Singapore on merchant vessels. Recent examples include the A-4 Skyhawks from HMAS Melbourne after the bow was damaged in the collision with Evans, and two replacement Sea Vixens shipped out in the early 1970s on a merchant vessel.
11 Anglesey Close, LES ELGEY Crawley,
West Sussex

. . . The "bridge" is of course the Marine Craft pier at Seletar. The Hornet has just been brought ashore by lighter from, probably, an aircraft carrier. In the foreground is part of the mainplane of another Hornet still on the lighter. This was not an un-usual method of delivery from ship to shore in the Far East. Additionally, the hangar in the background was at that time the home of the Far East Flying Boat Wing, comprising Nos 88, 205, and 209 Sqns equipped with Sunderland FB.5s.
No 242 OCU, FLT LT G. FORREST NICOLL

RAF Lyneham, Wilts

. . . Your picture shows the pier at RAF Seletar, and the hangar in the background was the Sunderland flying-boat base. The aircraft had come from Kai Tak aboard HMS Glory or HMS Eagle, and it was craned off onto a lighter at the Singapore naval base before being taken to the RAF base for repair. Your picture also shows another aircraft awaiting offloading. As the tractor had not arrived, we were just moving the aircraft along to make room for it,
31 Bradstone Road, K. w. HUNTLEY Folkestone, Kent

Top: the picture that launched a thousand letters. Below: another view of the crumpled wingtip which is said to have made the Hornet's inelegant journey necessary. Below right: probably the most beautiful plane in the world

level in some form of sailing dinghy. That was a decade later than your picture—my squadron, No 209, then had Pioneers, having disposed about six years before of its Sunderlands and the launches that throng your picture. The "Twin Pin" was not the most beautiful aeroplane ever made, but it gave me more enjoyment in the air than anything since my first trip in a Tiggy. I'd give my back teeth to relive 1962-65 again. Ah, nostalgia! Keep them coming.
WG CDR JACK MITCHELL

HQ British Forces,
Hong Kong, BFPO 1

. . . They are Hornets as. used by 33 Sqn to replace Tempest 2s. The squad-ron's Tempests were shipped out by HMS Unicorn or some other small carrier. The 'Erberts of "Spit Flight" at Seletar assembled them. The Hornets arrived by the same method, being unloaded at the naval base at Seletar and then shipped up on barges. "Spit Flight," as part of 390 MU, was responsible for the erection of replacement Spitfire 24s and other small aircraft. I can remember work-ing on a Hornet that was being held in storage ready for issue to 33 Sqn. Horley, Surrey R. w. RICHARDSON

. . . Top marks for aircraft recogni-tion but go to the bottom of the class for bridge identification. The Hornet at Seletar is standing on a jetty, not a bridge. You ask: WIH is it there? My guess is that the Hornets are being loaded onto lighters for trans-fer to one of HM ships at the naval base at Nee Soon. Any improvements on that?

Seeing that jetty again reminds me that from it I took some lovely shots

. . . The Sea Hornet is being manu-handled up the Marine Craft jetty at Seletar for either repair or storage at 389 or 390 MU. Aircraft too large to pass through Seletar's ornate but narrow main gate were moved round from a suitable landing point by lighter and craned from the lighter onto the jetty. During my time at Seletar (1966-68—heady days of the Beverley and Belvedere!), the first two-seat Lightnings were shipped to Singapore in advance of 74 Sqn, then moved from the main harbour to

. . . I'm sure someone's already told you WIHIH on that "bridge" at Seletar (Ah, Seletar!), but the photo-graph brought back such a flood of pleasant memories that I thought WTH, I'll write and tell you.
I'm pretty sure it's a Hornet, not the nautical variety (which as every-one agrees . . .), and the bridge is a jetty onto which one Hornet has been lifted while the second sits on a lighter awaiting its turn. I have some very firm recollections of that jetty, acquired at high speed from very low

of No 205 Sqn Sunderlands. If you want copies I'll dig them out next time I blow the dust off my photo-graph albums stored away in England. Best regards for the Chinese New Year from the fellow who removed the last float from the last RAF flying boat—a qualification which surely merits admission to the Bacon Hall of Aviation Fame which you're no doubt planning to establish.
5 Hirams Villa, R. J. SMITH Sai Kung,
New Territories, Hong Kong