

Neptunus Rex commanded the ship. Neptunus Rex returned to his watery domain, and Benn pulled into exotic Singapore on July 22 for a five-day visit.

Singapore, the Lion City, is located off the southern tip of the Malaysian Peninsula. This strategic trade location has made Singapore one of the largest and busiest ports in the world. Because of the hodgepodge of trading nations utilizing its freeport facilities, Singapore has become a melting pot of races, cultures and tongues. Indians, Chinese and Malays have poured into Singapore, bringing their diverse traditions and costume with them.

Raffles Place, the hub of Singapore's shopping district, was the first stop for many Benn sailors. From here they struck out for the varied shops or went on self-guided tours of the city. One of the more fascinating points of interest was the Tiger Balm Gardens. The Gardens contained colorful, grotesque statues, figurines and inscriptions that revealed the legendary past of Singapore and its people.

In contrast to the ornate Indian and Chinese architecture, a simple, stark, white monument towers over the city from a small waterfront park. The monument, designed by an Englishman, pays tribute to the men and women who lost their lives defending Singapore in World War II.

All too soon, Benn was back at sea, but she wasn't heading for the Tonkin Gulf this time. She was steaming for her home away from home; Sasebo. Enroute she acquired another four-striper. Her Executive Officer, Commander Vollmer, became Captain Vollmer. Benn remained in Sasebo for 10 days to complete a few minor repairs and then headed back to Yankee Station.

More than 40 ships anxiously

