

# ALL HANDS

THE BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL CAREER PUBLICATION

*in this issue:*  
**SMALL CRAFT:  
BIG JOB IN VIETNAM**

This magazine is intended  
for 10 readers. All should  
see it as soon as possible.  
**PASS THIS COPY ALONG**

NOVEMBER 1966





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Nav-Pers-O

NUMBER 598

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• **FRONT COVER:** SPEED MERCHANTS—Navy PBR (Patrol Boat, River) kicks up the water as it moves out in search of Viet Cong. The new fiber glass patrol boats are propelled and steered by jets of water.

• **AT LEFT:** NATION'S TOP HONOR—Constructionman Third Class Marvin G. Shields, USN, of MCB 11, was the first Navyman to receive the Medal of Honor for heroic action in Vietnam. Shields was posthumously awarded the Nation's top award for distinguishing himself in combat at Dong Xoai when his unit was attacked by the Viet Cong. (For full account of his actions, see page 62)

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UP THE 'CREEK'—Patrol craft of South Vietnamese River Force looks for VC. Right: Junk is checked by minesweeper.



HELLO THERE—Crew of Navy Swift boat search a Vietnamese junk for possible supplies for the Viet Cong.



# Sailing in the Midget Fleet

**T**HE WAR IN VIETNAM has been unusual in many respects. It has, for example, been fought against an almost invisible enemy that strikes, then fades into the jungle. At the same time, the enemy moves on the water in ships and small craft, taking advantage of the mobility of winding rivers and the protection of a tortuous coastline.

In the beginning, the Viet Cong could fight almost on its own terms, but the situation has changed greatly—more with each passing week.

Against an enemy of this kind, the role of the U.S. Navy in the Vietnam Theater must be a varied one. It ranges from carrier air strikes to shore bombardments by cruisers, destroyers and rocket ships. It involves naval units ashore and ships of all kinds, from the flagship of Commander Seventh Fleet, to the smallest naval craft. This report centers about the small combat craft.

The coastal and river areas are increasingly patrolled by the U.S. and Vietnamese navies, using a variety of old and new craft. Relatively few of the sampans, junks and coastal steamers that ply the Vietnamese waters are operated by the

Viet Cong, but it takes a sizable force of small combat boats to seek them out from the large number operated in the normal commerce of the area.

**T**WO RELATIVELY NEW U.S. Navy types—the *Swifts* and PBRs—are at the moment carrying a major portion of the load. Other models are being introduced as soon as their

**NAVY GUNNER** keeps twin 50s trained on junk as it approaches Harbor Patrol Boat 15 for check.



effectiveness has been proven. The *Swifts* are used primarily for coastal surveillance; the PBRs, for river patrol. Both are well suited for their special jobs.

The *Swifts* are 50 feet long and are propelled by diesel engines. They are armed with two .50-caliber machine guns mounted on top of the forward wheelhouse. They also carry another .50-caliber machine gun pickaback atop an 81mm mortar on the after deck.

Usually a lieutenant (jg) heads the crew, which frequently consists of a gunner's mate, radarman, boatswain's mate, a radioman and a Vietnamese interpreter.

Every crewmember aboard a *Swift* is a volunteer. Inasmuch as the number of volunteers far exceeds the billets available, the job is apparently widely sought.

Such popularity must be deserved but it certainly can't be attributed to the easy life led by the crew. *Swift* bases are usually primitive tent installations where the rattle of small arms fire is well known.

While they are on patrol, *Swift* boats offer a rough ride—very much like the old PTs. They may remain

at sea for three days and frequently can be found more than 100 miles from their home base somewhere along the 1000-odd miles of South Vietnamese coastline.

Living conditions aboard *Swifts* are spartan when you consider how long they remain on patrol. They do, nevertheless, have the essentials—bunks, a refrigerator, an electric stove and a head.

**N**O SPECIAL protocol is followed on board. For instance, whoever happens to be the best cook has the job. As often as not, the cook turns out to be the skipper.

Within 30 hours after *Swifts* arrived in Vietnam, they were in a fight. They engaged the Viet Cong on Phu Quoc Island in the Gulf of Thailand. The *Swifts* pumped mortar fire into three separate Viet Cong concentrations which were threatening a Vietnamese Army post. Their firepower was too much for the enemy; he quit.

There are more than 80 *Swift* boats now operating in Vietnamese coastal waters. The measure of their hard work can be judged by the 72,000 or more junks they stopped



MADE FOR THE JOB—PBRs and *Swifts* (below) are new types of patrol craft designed for the job of policing coast and numerous waterways of Vietnam.





IT'S A WHAT? Modified LCM carries a big fire power punch. Rt: LTJG A. L. Glass loads motor aboard a Swift boat.

and searched during an eight-month period.

Most of the junks searched turned out to be nothing more than fishing boats. Others carried supplies, arms and men for the Viet Cong; still others carried draft dodgers and deserters.

The *Swift* boats get very little rest now, and even less is in store for them. Navy plans call for three alternating crews to keep *Swifts* now operating in Vietnam on patrol as long as possible.

**A**BOUT SEVEN months after *Swift* boats arrived in Vietnam, an even newer guerrilla warfare weapon made its appearance. It was the PBR (for Patrol Boat, River).

Specifically, the PBRs' purpose is

to keep the rivers of Vietnam open to peaceful trade and to deny their use to the Viet Cong. They have the distinction of being the first river patrol boats the Navy has acquired since the Civil War.

River boat design has changed during the past 100 years. The current model has a fiber glass hull which is lined with plastic foam to increase buoyancy.

The hull, of course, can't stop bullets but that's a matter of small importance. A PBR, even with holes in the hull, can still remain afloat while all it needs for a repair job is a brush and a "bucket of goop."

The little boats are only 31 feet long and 10 and a half feet wide at the beam. They draw about 12 to 18 inches when dead in the water

but when they're on the move, they can get along on as little as nine.

Power comes from two 220-hp engines and the PBRs are propelled by two water-jet units which obviate the necessity of propellers and rudders. Their top speed, fully loaded, is about 25 knots.

**D**ESPITE THEIR speed and maneuverability, however, river patrol boats have no easy job. But then, a Vietnamese river isn't easy to patrol, at best. It swarms with junks and sampans, any one of which might be helping the Viet Cong. To complicate matters further, a sampan made of bamboo can navigate in only a few inches of water.

These difficulties are compounded by overhanging vegetation under which a sampan can travel practically unseen along the banks of a river or through a mangrove swamp. Control, under such conditions, seemed almost impossible at first glance.

Nevertheless, the job is not impossible and the results are beginning to show. Combat material is now in short supply for the Viet Cong, and VC munitions factories often lack at least one ingredient essential to producing a weapon.

The PBR crews which play a major role in creating these shortages usually are headed by a boatswain's mate first class who is boat captain. One engineman third class is the boat engineer and a gunner's mate third class is both gunner and seaman. An additional crewman can also be carried when necessary. Frequently, this is a Vietnamese interpreter who also knows the peculiarities and geography of the river.

READY—Craft of Vietnamese junk division stand by in port ready to chase VC.







LOOT—Captured weapons lie on deck.

Inasmuch as PBRs carry no berthing or messing facilities, they do not operate far from their bases at Can Tho, Nha Be, Cat Lo, and My Tho. A fifth group operates from USS *Tortuga* (LSD 26) which is stationed off the delta river mouths.

**N**EITHER THE *Swift* nor the PBR is a new design. Both are essentially pleasure boat hulls adapted to conditions in Vietnam. There is, however, an unusual type employed by the U. S. Navy in Vietnam. It is called a surface effects ship and three models are now undergoing shakedown under combat conditions.

These new types, which arrived in Vietnam last May, float on a cushion of air over water, swamp and flatland areas and are capable of more than 50 knots when combat-loaded. Logically enough, they are called Patrol Air Cushion vehicles (PACV for short).

The PACV is 39 feet long and 23 feet wide. It carries one .50-caliber machine gun atop the pilot house and individual weapons for the crew.

All three patrol air cushion vehicles now in Vietnam have been brought together to form PACV Division 107, a unit of the Coastal Surveillance Force. The division was given a job betwixt and between the assignments of the *Swift* boats and the PBR. They are to prevent Viet Cong infiltration from the sea and the tidal areas along the river mouths.

A PACV might be sent out on an independent patrol or it might be used to follow up enemy contacts made by other units.

The PACV might also patrol very



SWIFT OPERATOR—Crewman mans tiller of *Swift* boat on patrol. Below: A Navy patrol air cushion vehicle (PACV) leaves the water to cruise across beach.



AT EASE—PBRs lie along pier at Naval Support Activity Detachment at Nha Be.





HUNTING GROUND—Photo of Mekong Delta points up patrolling difficulties.

shallow water where even low draft boats such as the PBR could not pursue light VC sampans.

Extra crews have been assigned to PACV Division 107 so the new craft, like the *Swifts*, can be kept on station for long periods.

Each crew has an officer in charge, an assistant officer in charge, a gunner's mate and an engineer.

ONLY TIME will tell, of course, but it may well be that, when the history of the small combat boats in Vietnam is written, the innovation of the PACV may prove as momentous to sea transportation as the advent of the jet has been to air travel.

Another new type of combat boat may join the PACVs in Vietnam by late next year. A water-jet powered hydrofoil gunboat capable of speeds in excess of 40 knots is now under development.

The use of hydrofoils as combat vessels is not a new one. Models have been built in the past. The current version has the advantage of a simple water-jet propulsion which eliminates the transmission lubrication problems inherent in propeller-driven craft.

The new model will use its water jets both when it is hull-borne and foil-borne. Gas-turbine and diesel engines will drive centrifugal pumps which in turn, will give the water jets their thrust.

The boats will displace about 60 tons and be 71 feet long with a 25-foot beam. They will be armed with a 40mm gun forward and an 81mm mortar aft. Twin .50-caliber machine guns will be mounted on each side of the bridge.

ALTHOUGH *Swifts* and PBRs, as well as PACVs and other new combat boat ideas, have more or less monopolized the headlines coming from Vietnam, the old reliables are very much on the job, too. Often they are doing a type of work hitherto unfamiliar to them.

For example, many minesweepers of the U. S. Seventh Fleet are patrolling coastal waters off South Vietnam. Their job is essentially the same as other United States boats patrolling similar areas—preventing the Viet Cong from smuggling goods and arms by sea.

Both oceangoing and coastal minesweepers are used. The larger craft must use their motor whaleboats to inspect Vietnamese boats inasmuch as fragile junks could be smashed to kindling if bumped by a Navy MSO. The smaller minesweepers usually are able to go alongside without the possibility of catastrophe.

The U. S. Coast Guard is also on the job with 26 of its 82-foot cutters which are now painted Navy gray (to reduce reflections at night) instead of Coast Guard white.

UNITED STATES Navymen are also found aboard Vietnamese naval vessels such as junks, STCAN, STCAN/FOMs and river assault group boats.

The sizes of these boats run from approximately 35 feet to 50 feet and armament is principally in the form of machine guns, bazookas and individual weapons for the crew.

United States Navymen are on board these boats in the capacity of advisors. In an assignment of this kind an ability to get along and to communicate, despite language difficulties, is a factor which has accounted for the success of the Vietnamese-U.S. Navy teams.

Sometimes the job also requires heroism, as it did with Lieutenant Harold D. Meyerkord, USNR who was a senior naval advisor to the Vietnamese Navy's River Force.

Last year, LT Meyerkord was leading a river sortie into insurgent territory when his boat was ambushed. Although he was wounded in the first fusillade, he returned VC fire at point-blank range until killed.

LT Meyerkord had been directly involved in more than 30 combat operations. For his last and three earlier actions, he was awarded the Navy Cross—posthumously.

ADVISORS to the Vietnamese River Force eat, sleep and live Vietnamese-style while on patrol. Sometimes this calls for an ability to fold an American-sized frame into cramped spaces—even smaller than those on a pre-World II submarine. U. S. Navymen with a fondness for rice and seafood find plenty of these two commodities in their diet. This can be much more varied than it sounds.

American Navymen in Vietnam, whether serving in their own boats or as advisors aboard the vessels of the Vietnamese Navy, have a challenging assignment in helping this war-torn nation resist the Viet Cong.

Their work is now bearing fruit and the Viet Cong are feeling the pinch. "Charlie," as the unknown Viet Cong infiltrator has come to be called, still has the advantages that go with stealthy attack and rapid retreat. These advantages will, however, be of little use to him if he is denied the essentials he needs, most of which are now arriving in smaller and smaller quantities from the north—thanks in large part to aerial, coastal and river surveillance.

—Bob Neil

ALL HANDS



TAKING A LOOK—Minemen using whaleboat inspect a Vietnamese junk.

## MOS: Many-Ships-in-One

IF YOU WERE to conduct a survey in WestPac on the variety of jobs performed by a single ship, you'd probably be swamped with record claims—so, it's likely you would end up pigeonholing the idea.

In the meantime, here's a report which would surely rank high among the contenders if such a survey were taken. It comes from Mine Division 91 comprised of *uss Conflict* (MSO 426), *Persistent* (MSO 491), *Dynamic* (MSO 432), *Endurance* (MSO 435), and *Implicit* (MSO 455), all homeported in Long Beach.

The division claims (tongue-in-cheek, we're sure) while on its recent Far East tour that its minesweepers acquired these additional ship profiles: oiler, water lighter, tugboat, stores and refrigerator, repair, hospital, search and salvage, communications relay, command control, hydrographic survey, replenishment lifeguard, gunfire support, patrol and boarding vessel.

Tongue-in-cheek or not, that's a mouthful.

Nevertheless, it represents the variety of tasks required of MinDiv 91 while a member of the Market Time Patrol.

THIS, IT SEEMS, is characteristic of all the smaller ships operating with the patrol, which vigilantly tries to stop the coastal flow of con-

traband by junks and boats to Viet Cong forces.

To do this, Market Time employs destroyer escorts, 82-foot Coast Guard cutters, 50-foot PCF *Swift* patrol boats, and the 165-foot minesweepers.

These U.S. units join the South Vietnamese Junk Force, but, because they are few in number, the members of the patrol are often required to play many roles, including



STAR ADVISOR—LT John E. Locke was awarded Bronze Star Medal for work as shipboard advisor to the Vietnamese Navy's Sea Force on six deployments.

those assignments mentioned before.

This is primarily due to the wide area they must patrol which stretches 12 miles to sea and runs the full length of Vietnam's 1000-mile coastline. Within this area one can count from 4000 to 5000 boats and junks daily, most of which are used for fishing, but any number of which could be unfriendly.

To ascertain their legality, the patrol will often board and inspect the passengers and cargo of suspected junks. If contraband or troops are discovered, Vietnamese liaison officers who ride in all U. S. craft, turn them over to the custody of Vietnam's Junk Force.

In order to counter the enemy's infiltration efforts, the patrol ships and craft often spend long tours on station.

FOR INSTANCE, *Dynamic* spent 74 days on one patrol. She was replenished underway 27 times in order to sustain her operations which covered 9000 miles within the inspection zone.

And, there is always the possibility of hostile contact with the enemy.

*Implicit* was fired on by Viet Cong forces while cruising close to shore and was forced to retaliate with her 40mm, 30-and 50-caliber guns.

Another engagement resulted in the decoration of five men from *Endurance*. They were awarded medals for helping to destroy a Viet Cong coastal fortification which they approached in the ship's motor whaleboat. The five men attacked one flank of the enemy stronghold while Vietnamese Junk Force sailors attacked the other. They held their position in the face of heavy enemy fire and relayed spotting information to their ship. *Endurance* was then able to silence the shore resistance with her guns from about 1000 yards.

These encounters are typical of the demands asked of Market Time minesweepers. But, by no means do they encompass all that is expected of them.

Today the minesweeper may serve as a mother ship for servicing and replenishing the needs of the *Swift* boats. Tomorrow, in addition to providing gunfire support to U. S. forces ashore, she might conduct a survey of her own—a hydrographic survey on shoreline depths.





**SILENT SEARCH**—Trainee aboard PBR maintains vigil during early morn cruise.

**T**HE WIND IS COLD as it blows over the water. Except for the distant whine of diesel engines, the bay is quiet. You wait, peering intently into the darkness, trying to distinguish shapes in the shadows ashore. Suddenly, flashes of light erupt from those shadows as machine guns begin firing.

But this time there is no danger, because you are in Grizzly Bay at

Mare Island, Calif., learning to be a Navy PBR (Patrol Boat, River) crewman. The machine gun bursts are blanks—but the next time they could be from Viet Cong guns, shooting at you from the Vietnam coastline.

PBRs are already operating off the coast of South Vietnam. Many more will eventually be there. As with Navy *Swift* boats and ships

and Vietnamese junks, they stop and search junks and sampans for Viet Cong goods and arms.

Designed especially for work in shallow areas, the PBRs have neither rudder nor propeller. They are propelled and steered by jets of water. The boats have a speed of about 25 knots.

The fiber glass hull is lined with plastic foam for additional buoyancy. Armor plating surrounds the crew positions and engine compartment.

Firepower aboard the PBRs consists of a twin .50-caliber machine gun mounted forward, a .30-caliber machine gun aft, a Mark 79 grenade launcher and two AR-15 light automatic rifles. Small arms kept aboard include a .12-gauge shotgun and .38-caliber revolvers.

Radar is used for navigation. All PBRs are equipped with transistorized FM radio communications systems.

As a future crewman, you will learn gunnery, survival and a little of the Vietnamese language while at Mare Island. You will also learn something about the other crewmembers' jobs.

The four weeks of operational training at the PBR school consist of classroom work and day and night drills with the boats. You are



**Rt:** Men are taught survival swimming.

**"OVER YOUR HEAD"**—Trainees practice with dungaree water wings. **Rt:** PBR steams at full speed during an exercise.

# School for Patrol Boat Crews

**SAME FOR US BUT MORE OF IT.**

taught radio procedures, lessons on boat engines, radar operation and survival swimming.

Though the intense heat, bugs and Viet Cong are missing from the otherwise authentic training area, the serious business of war is in the faces and actions of the students. Young and old alike share the same thought—learn today and survive tomorrow.

Many of the teachers are veteran boat crewmen of the Korean conflict and Vietnam. They teach their charges how to get the job done and how to survive.

One instructor drills home the meaning of what may lie ahead, with the statement, "Expect, but don't ask for, casualties."

"The boats are fast and highly maneuverable," the instructor tells you. "This is your best defense against attack."

As you pull into the bay from the berths at Mare Island, you notice that the boats are quieter than most. Their sound is soft and whining. A chief petty officer has the small wheel in his hands. The junior officer is on the radio. Two seamen are at their gun positions.

Behind you, the boats move out and split into formation. You're heading for your first night patrol. The air is cool and quiet as you

move into one of the sloughs. A slight breeze plays over the water, causing ripples.

You move into the shadows and slow the engines to minimize the noise. You can hear the water lapping at the sides of the boat.

Suddenly there's a voice chattering Vietnamese communist slogans in broken English. Just as suddenly, the flashes and sounds of gunfire

slash at your boat.

As a student, this is your first taste of a night "firefight." Tomorrow there will be more classroom work and swimming. Then you'll be out in the boats again.

The course is tough. But you try to be the best student they've ever had—just to keep from being part of the casualty statistics.

Photos by R. W. Conrad, PHC, USN

**ARMAMENT** from PBRs is stripped for maintenance during training session.



**TRAINEES** listen to instruction on PBR engines. Crewmen must know every job.

# SMALL CRAFT: Big Job in Vietnam



Swift boats have speed to chase Viet Cong infiltrators along South Vietnamese coast. They are distant cousins of World War II PT boats.



Artist's conception of hydrofoil gunboat which may be used in Vietnam. Model being tested in U.S. emphasizes speed, maneuverability.



Rubber boats like this are handy for carrying U.S. Marines into swampy areas to hunt VC. Here men leave USS Weiss (APD 135).



LCVP is representative of many amphibious craft in Vietnam. Here Seventh Fleet Amphibious Ready Group craft returns after landing.



Gunner stands ready with machine gun as new high-speed PBR patrols river.



Crewmen of U.S. Navy minesweeper inspect fishing junk in South China Sea.



Navymen man the helm of a Navy Swift boat as they patrol waters off Vietnam.



USN Patrol Boats, River (PBR) are made of fiber glass and are guided by twin jets of water. In motion, they draw as little as nine inches.



USN Patrol Air Cushion Vehicle (PACV) is newcomer to Vietnam. It not only moves over the water but also can travel across land areas.



Coastal minesweepers (MSC) play a new role in Vietnam. They are used in Market Time patrols which intercept VC men and supplies.



U.S. Coast Guard cutters (26 are now patrolling Vietnamese waters) are painted Navy gray to reduce reflection. They are USCG-manned.



LCMs from an attack cargo ship search dense mangrove swamp for lurking VC.



U.S. Navy Swift Boat (PCF) backs out of USS Comstock (LSD 19) at Qui Nhon.



Skipper of Navy PCF searches horizon for Viet Cong craft infiltrating the area.



## SMALL CRAFT: Big Job in Vietnam (cont.)



Vietnamese Navy River Assault Group boats like this resemble Civil War Monitor. Such patrol boats specialize in counterinsurgency work.



South Vietnamese Navy ST/CANs patrol waterway on lookout for VC. USN advisors work with Vietnamese Navymen in boats like these.



Junk for sail — South Vietnam's Navy uses wind-powered junks, too. Their crews keep an eye on shipping as part of Market Time.



Vietnamese Navy Command junk carries U.S. advisors as it patrols near shore. Junks are usually armed with machine guns and mortar.



South Vietnamese patrol junk with U.S. Navy advisor aboard searches local boat.



U.S. and Vietnamese personnel of river patrol take a break while hunting for VC.



Junk Force radioman mans his post as craft patrols coast in search of Viet Cong.



Vietnamese Navy ST CAW/FOM has V-shaped hull to help make it resistant to mines. These patrol boats usually carry crews of eight to 10.



Members of the team—U.S. advisors work with Vietnamese Navymen in this type of craft and others which search out enemy infiltrators.



Friend or enemy? Except for registration numbers required by the So. Vietnamese government, junks of fishing or cargo fleet look alike.



Gun boat (MSF), a member of South Vietnam's blue-water Navy. Such boats are typical of deep water boats which patrol coastline.



The junk patrol searches a suspicious craft under the eyes of Navy advisor.



Market Time patrols turn up supplies and ammo being smuggled to Viet Cong.



Navy advisor checks progress of repairs at Vietnamese Junk Force repair facility.



DA NANG TUG—USS *Manhattan* (YTB 779) pulls APL from the mud. Rt: The latest in Navy tugs heads for a job.

## Manhattan in Miniature

IT IS FOUR in the morning. The Navy tugboat, USS *Manhattan* (YTB 779), steams slowly out into the South China Sea from the port of Da Nang. Her destination is Chu Lai, to return with a berthing ship (APL 5) in tow later that afternoon.

The berthing ship is needed in Da Nang to house the many personnel reporting for duty at the U. S. Naval Support Activity, Da Nang. *Manhattan* will bring her back.

*Manhattan*, commissioned in February 1966, is of the newest type tug in the U. S. Navy. She packs a lot of power. Guiding an aircraft carrier into a harbor used to take six small tugs. Now two tugs like YTB 779 can bring one in without any trouble. These tugs have a crew

of 14 men who eat and sleep aboard.

On the way to Chu Lai, *Manhattan* meets a *Swift* boat which swings alongside to inform the tugmaster, Chief Boatswain's Mate Charles Geber, that all is clear.

Upon arriving at Chu Lai, the tug waits while pusher boats guide an LST through the current. A pilot is sent to the tug to guide the boat around the sandbars and through the narrow opening of the Giang river.

As the tug pulls up beside the APL 5, the crew man their stations and waste no time in securing the two together, showing the teamwork they have developed during the months aboard *Manhattan*. Under the direction of Chief Geber the tug frees the APL from the mud, and

with the help of pusher boats nudges her safely outside the harbor.

The chief then positions the tug near the bow of her charge while the tugmen tie a line to the bow. As *Manhattan* moves out in front, the men pay out the line. When the berthing ship is about 500 feet behind the tug, the line is made secure.

Upon reaching the mouth of Da Nang port, a radio call is made for a pusher boat to help the tug guide the APL through the ships in the harbor to its anchorage.

With final maneuvering done, the tugboat YTB 779 quickly unhitches and steams down the Da Nang river to another job.

—Story and photos by  
George L. Eldridge, YN3(JO), USN

FOLLOW ME—*Manhattan* takes the berthing ship in tow for trip to Da Nang. Skipper gets his ship underway.







AT HOME IN VIETNAM—Odd-looking Navy 'houseboat' known as APL 5 has berthing space for 700 Navymen.

## Noah's Ark of Chu Lai

Here's an odd-looking craft which appears to have sailed straight out of the Bible into the harbor of the Chu Lai combat base. She looks very much like Noah's Ark, but she's all Navy. She's a kind of river houseboat, painted Navy gray. She's APL 5, moored at the LST ramp at Chu Lai.

Each Sunday morning at 1030, the crew's lounge becomes a chapel as U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Four's Chaplain John C. Haney, Jr., conducts Divine Service.

The congregation is comprised of a mixture of Marines, Seabees, members of shore parties, engineers, and Fleet sailors.

APL 5 is 260 feet long and 48 feet wide. Like Noah's Ark, she has no main propulsion system of her own. She must be towed by tugs and nudged into mooring sites. She came from the Reserve Fleet, Guam, pulled by an oceangoing tug via Yokosuka, Japan, where she was recently outfitted to care more comfortably for the men of the naval supply activity. She has berthing spaces for 700. Her crew of 92 is commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Charles R. Newkirk and four other officers.

The APL's unique "ark-like" sil-

houette is the result of canvas awnings stretched across the boat deck from bow to stern. However, she has mounts for 4-inch/50 caliber machine guns for defense.

APL 5 has all new stainless steel galley equipment, modernized head

facilities, and air-conditioned living spaces.

From a distance, moored as she is near the red sandy beach with its palm trees, the APL 5 looks very much like Noah's Ark come to rest at Chu Lai, South Vietnam.



HARBOR HOME—These APLs (Auxiliary, Personnel Lodging), anchored two miles out in Da Nang harbor, furnish barracks for Navymen working in the area.



HEADING IN—First wave of amphibious craft heads ashore during amphibious attack in Vietnam. Below: Marines debark from attack transport USS Pickaway.



COPTERS bring assault inland.



ALL ASHORE—Marines of Seventh Fleet Amphibious Ready Group hit the beach in raid against VC-held area.



# Landing Force—Then and Now

ANYONE who watches the late show on television regularly is probably impressed by the sheer numbers of those WW II blood-and-thunder movies of amphibious landings on Iwo Jima, Guadalcanal, and elsewhere. But even if you have been seeing too many of them lately you gotta admit they were EXCITING.

Twenty-five years after World War II, we're still making amphibious landings in the Pacific. Nowadays, however, they may not be so exciting—in fact, because of the nature of the current conflict, they may be more aptly described as exacting—and tedious.

However unglamorous today's landings in Vietnam may be, one factor remains the same—they're still involved maneuvers, requiring lots of advance planning, expert timing, and cooperation between Navy and Marine forces.

The pattern for the World War II landings is pretty familiar—

First, the heavy bombardment by the big guns of the Fleet, joined by the aircraft embarked in its carriers, giving the enemy troops dug in on the island a good working over.

Then the frogmen launched from their little rubber rafts carrying sacks of high explosives to the beach. Their

job was to blow up the man-made obstacles strung along the coast to clear the way for the waves of landing boats.

Hundreds of assault craft maneuvered into position alongside the troop ships to take aboard their load of Marines. Like a medieval phalanx the boats lined up waiting for the order to charge toward the beach and the waiting enemy gunfire.

The order finally came to land the landing forces, and the boats thrust ahead . . . and you know the rest.

AFTER WORLD WAR II, the amphibious forces trained, practiced, and prepared themselves to meet similar military situations, and the techniques used in 1943 were pretty much the same in 1950, when two divisions of troops poured into Korea in the brilliant landing operation at Inchon.

Amphibious warfare is defined by an official publication on the subject as "The conduct of military operations in which sizable forces are transferred from sea to a hostile, or potentially hostile, shore, for the purpose of initiating sustained land actions."

U. S. amphibious operations in Vietnam aren't quite like that. The

forces involved are smaller, the tactics have changed, and even the missions are new.

This year's amphibious landings in South Vietnam provide excellent examples of how the official description of a military operation can be somewhat inexact. You may have to bend the book a little to make past techniques fit today's problems.

The lay of the land can change

your thinking. Geography, of course, has a lot to do with tactics, and this is especially true in an operation such as an amphibious landing. If the objective is an island with a wide strip of sandy beach all around it, the assault forces have someplace to go when they land. However, if a 100-foot high cliff comes right to the water's edge, another way will have to be found. Geography is a problem.

DAWN ATTACK—Navymen control landing of amphibious craft in Vietnam.







**MORE POWER**—Ontos on LST helps lay down support fire during landing.

**R**ECENTLY, landing operations have centered in an area called the Rung Sat, which in Vietnamese means dense jungle. U. S. troops have learned to call it other things. The whole region is covered with thick mangrove swamps, so thick that a man with a full pack often finds himself thrashing around for 20 minutes in an effort to advance 20 feet.

In this area, landings over the beaches are somewhat impractical. There is a small beach, of course, but when the troops have crossed it, there is practically nowhere to go. At least, not effectively.

For this reason, the assault forces operating in the Rung Sat area have

taken a tip from the enemy. The Viet Cong use the many rivers like roads through the jungle, moving supplies and equipment from place to place in homemade sampans and junks. U. S. forces and their Vietnamese comrades have taken to the rivers, too.

Many of the landings are being made along the banks of the Soirap River, in an effort to find and destroy the concentrations of Viet Cong guerrillas entrenched in the swamps. From the amphibious ready group in the South China Sea, the landing forces are dispatched up these rivers, with orders to seek out the enemy.

When the World War II order was given to land amphibious craft, it

meant hundreds of boats churning toward the beach. Today's landing force usually consists of about 20 landing craft, gliding up the river one behind the other in a convoy. It's an odd looking group, often surrounded by Vietnamese Navy junks, who join U. S. Navy gunboats and *Swift* boats to form a protective screen for the troop-laden landing craft.

**I**N PREVIOUS YEARS, amphibious forces have been trained to think in terms of the big push, with thousands of men rushing over the beaches in one big landing operation. Today's landings are more like a series of small nudges, up and down the rivers of the Rung Sat.

Because of the difficulty in movement overland, the concept of vertical assault has proven highly effective against the Viet Cong in this region. But here, too, there are problems of terrain. The helo pilot may see a patch of seemingly clear ground on which to land, that turns out to be an uninviting spot into which to jump. During a recent landing, the embarked Marines jumped into water up to their waists, then spent the next 24 hours up to their necks in it, as they painstakingly searched for the Viet Cong.

But the real key to the assaults on the river banks is the old reliable LST, or tank landing ship. Where deep-draft ships simply can not make it up the rivers, the LSTs, with their shallow draft, can make it with ease. They slip up the rivers, stick their

**THIS IS A BEACH?**—Amphibious landings in Vietnam require dexterity. Here unit tries a landing in mangrove swamp.





noses into the swamp along the river bank, drop the ramp, and unload their cargo of troops.

The LSTs often have unusual configurations. With only a couple of machine guns for firepower, the amphibious forces have come up with yet another example of improvising to get the job done. The LSTs' firepower is increased by strapping an antitank vehicle (called an *Ontos*) to the deck, and using its guns against the Viet Cong on the river banks.

Although the blast of the *Onto's* gun sometimes shakes windshields out of the embarked vehicles, and breaks light-bulbs throughout the ship, it provides an excellent means of fire support for the landing force.

Where World War II assault troops were often two or three divisions strong, the Rung Sat landing forces are usually only of battalion size, and are known as the Special Landing Force. Their mission is to search and destroy. When they are landed, they fan out and search for the Viet Cong, when intelligence reports have previously indicated they are established in the area.

**H**ERE AGAIN, today's landings have changed quite a bit since the World War II actions. In those days, the concept was to land the troops, establish a beachhead, then push inland until the island was taken.

In Vietnam, the troops land, flush out the Viet Cong, then return to the river bank and the waiting landing craft. Then, on to the next landing zone. Where large-scale landings have always been known as assaults, these relatively small probes are called raids.

Although these raids are normally search-and-destroy operations, the jobs assigned to the landing forces



**AROUND AND AROUND**—Assault craft circle landing ship dock USS *Alamo* (LSD 33) in preparation for amphibious landing during operation Deck House II.

are not always destructive. For instance, one amphibious landing early this year was designed to save the rice harvest of a small South Vietnamese village. The landing force was put ashore, then the troops took up positions all around the village and its rice paddies.

The presence of the U. S. troops discouraged an attempt by the Viet Cong to raid the village and destroy the rice harvest. When the rice was safely garnered, the U. S. forces left the area.

Another nondestructive element being used extensively in the Vietnam amphibious operations is the Civic Action Team. Made up of a doctor and a few hospital corpsmen and dental technicians from the ships of the amphibious ready group, these small teams land with the Marines during each amphibious assault.

Besides the Viet Cong, the South Vietnamese villagers have other

problems. Sickness is one of them. The civic action team sets up a clinic in the village, enabling the people to receive much-needed medical attention. This goes over big with the villagers, and makes friends for our side.

In one visit recently, 150 dental extractions were performed; over 400 patients were treated for various illnesses, and medicine, soap and vitamins were distributed among the villagers.

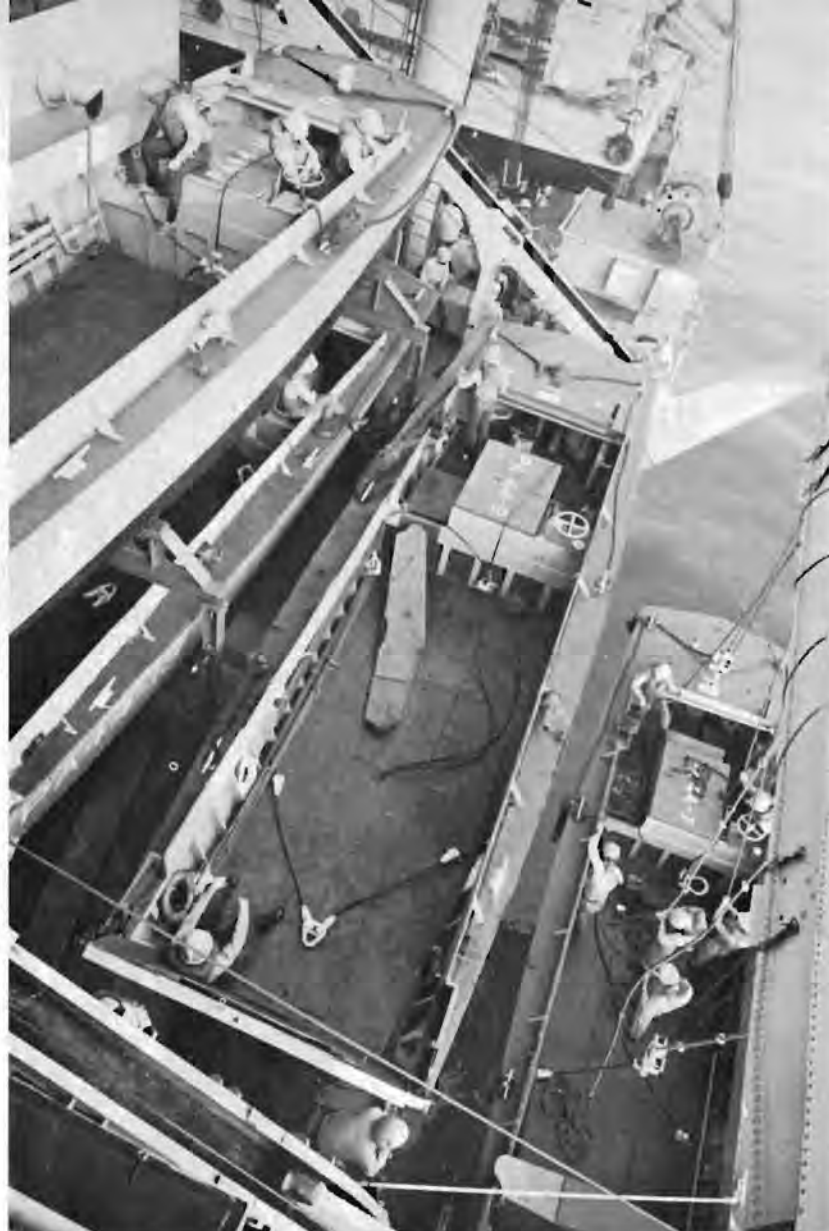
The war in Vietnam has presented many new problems to U. S. forces fighting there. However, the Navy has always met fresh problems with even fresher solutions. Hence, the new look in amphibious operations in the Pacific.

Feature length movies were needed to tell of the Iwo Jima and Guadalcanal landings. In Vietnam, a long series of short shorts would do.

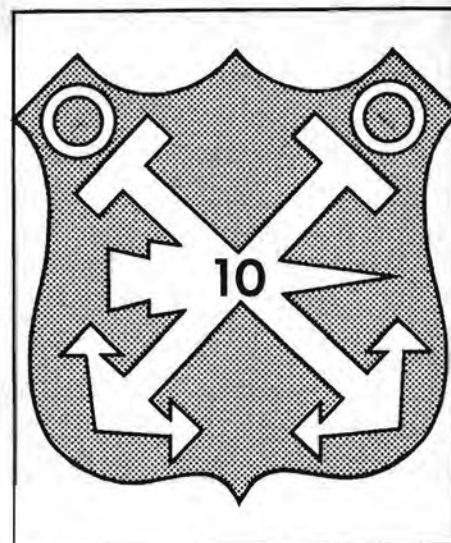
—Jim Teague, JO1, USN

**LOOK OUT VC**—Smoke rises from strike by bombers as VC is softened in amphibious search and destroy operation.





**FAST WORK**—Fremont crew unload all boats in less than 23 minutes. Below: Captain Casey, Fremont CO, commended crew for work at awards ceremony.



SHIP won plaque for 10 "A" awards.

## It's Ten in a Row for Fremont

**A**S FAR AS anyone aboard USS *Fremont* knows, only one U.S. Navy ship has ever won 10 straight amphibious assault awards, and that's a 23-year-old attack transport—named USS *Fremont* (APA 44). Now, she's going for 11.

*Fremont* is a top performer in her field because her crew members—every one of them—want it that way. They're proud of their record; they're determined, dedicated, and good.

Not content with doing merely what is required of them, the entire crew competes, by division, rating and individual, to see who can do the best job in the least time, on the winches, the bridge, the hatches, the phones and the boats.

Stewards, storekeepers and yeomen join boatswain's mates and enginemen in manning hatches and winches, and launching and operating the ship's 21 landing craft. Everyone is involved.

The 10th award was earned at the end of *Fremont's* 10th Med cruise. At that time, *Fremont* earned a 94.6 score. Her 21 boats hit the water in 19 minutes, swiftly and safely.

*Fremont* and her men have been setting this kind of pace since 1943 when she was commissioned at Pascagoula, Miss. (as a merchant ship). Recommissioned that fall as an attack transport, APA 44 sailed to the Pacific where she earned a distinguished war record, including com-



HERE IT IS—Richard McBride, BT2, accepts plaque for *Fremont* crew. Rt: LCM goes over the side for an exercise.



bat at Saipan, Peleliu, Leyte, Lingayen Gulf and Iwo Jima.

Since then, in addition to her 10 Med cruises, *Fremont* has deployed seven times to the Caribbean. And there have been numerous operations off the East Coast.

The crew's enthusiasm and initiative in making little adjustments and improvements throughout the ship-to-shore landing operations help make the award-winning difference. The leading petty officers know their business, set high standards, and work hard to get the best results.

Thirty-two *Fremont* sailors, led by John H. Soucy, boatswain's mate first class, make up the boat group. The men watch each other and

when one does something special, the others pick it up. New men aboard soon realize they're in fast company.

As a salute to all the men in the past 10 years who have helped *Fremont* earn the 10 awards, the man with the longest time aboard, Richard A. McBride, boilerman second class, received a special plaque from Commander Amphibious Force.

Only *Fremont* can display the new plaque, for it was specially designed and authorized for the 10th award. Seaman Richard L. Snow won an insignia contest held after *Fremont* realized adequate hash-mark room was lacking on the bridge. Approval came from the Chief of Naval Operations.

Any other ship that can equal *Fremont's* 10 straight can also paint on the insignia. But for a year at least, only *Fremont's* bridge will have the honor.

About 200 dependents of *Fremont's* crew attended the ceremony in Norfolk. Then they were taken to sea for a one-day cruise to watch their men demonstrate their skills.

Former commanding officers who helped the ship win its 10 awards also were invited to the ceremony.

Now, *Fremont* will have to lay her amphibious assault award on the line this fall or early winter.

*Fremont* men aren't unduly concerned. By this time, they hope they know how to win.

—Joe M. Law, JOCM, USN

**FREMONT SKILLS**—Cargo net (l) gets repaired. Boat crew (c) prepares for hoisting. Boat (r) comes alongside ship.







COLLECTORS—PMU men get insects from trap, dip mosquito larvae from stream and identify species of a mosquito.

# Battling Enemy# 2

**T**HERE ARE 38 Navymen at PMU Da Nang. In their personal war the Viet Cong are a nuisance and disease is the enemy. Their greatest worries are the mosquitoes. And the rats.

PMU stands for Preventive Medicine Unit. The Navymen combat cholera, typhus, plague, encephalitis, dengue and malaria in the 66,000 square miles of the First Corps area between the 17th parallel and Quang Ngai.

One of the unit's five sections operates a laboratory at the Force Logistics Support Group in an area west of the Da Nang Air Base. The lab is equipped specifically to perform bacteriological tests.

When someone in the area is afflicted with an infectious disease, it is often this lab which makes the positive identification of the specific bacterium or parasite which is causing the illness. Early diagnosis is essential for proper treatment of the patient and, in certain situations, for prevention of spread of the disease.

The Medical Service Corps officer and his three enlisted assistants at the lab also examine biological specimens collected by other members of the PMU.

**T**HE UNIT also has an entomology section — a mobile bug group, to be nontechnical. An MSC officer and five enlisted men keep track of insects, especially mosquitoes.

When there is an outbreak of malaria, the entomology group is sent to the location where they collect mosquito specimens and decide which of the many varieties is the culprit.

Once the carriers are identified, chemicals are used to kill them. A survey of the mosquito population is made before spraying and is matched with a later one to determine the effectiveness of the spraying. The region is then watched carefully for any sign of return of the problem.

In the course of their work, the

entomology group has classified more than 3600 insect species. Their collection of insects prevalent in Viet Nam is one of the world's most extensive.

When spraying the area to kill the mosquitoes is indicated, the assignment goes to Lieutenant Berlin Taylor, a former hospital corpsman who is now an MSC officer. He and his vector control team of a dozen men use a helicopter which has been modified for insecticide dispersal.

The airborne spraying apparatus is often used to clear areas of insect pests. Locations such as Camp Tien Sha, the main berthing cantonment for the Naval Support Activity, Da Nang, and other areas within the city are frequent targets for spraying. An overabundance of pesty insects, even though they do not carry disease, can have unsettling effects on morale.

**A**NOTHER SPECIALTY of the Preventive Medicine Unit is mammalogy. A five-man team collects and identifies the various local species of mammals, and watches them carefully for indications of disease. This team has collected over 250 rats in 14 species alone, not to mention a long and varied list of snakes, squirrels and shrews.

The mammalogy group occasionally makes a spectacular find. Hospital Corpsman Third Class Thomas J. McIntyre and Hospital Corpsman First Class Paul F. Ryan recently returned to headquarters with a doulangur, a rare primate which, according to one source, has not been found in a zoo since 1880.

—Howard M. Geiger, YN1, USN

CHEMICAL SPRAY is spread over jungle via helicopter to kill mosquito larvae.







# Going Up

**I**T'S ALL IN a day's work, the work of MCB Eleven's steelworkers on site at Da Nang, Vietnam. This series of photos shows the Seabee teamwork exercised in the erecting of heavy steel building frames for a warehouse.

*Clockwise from the Top:* (1) Foundation and deck of Building Thirteen have been completed and the building frames assembled and laid out ready for erection. (2) At 1:30 in the afternoon approximately 70 per cent of the frames have been put in place and roof purlins have been placed in four bays. (3) Last frame is bolted into place at about 4:55. (4) This is a view of the day's work. All 44 steel frames have been erected; 50 per cent of the sidewall girts, 40 per cent of the roof purlins and all 80 eave struts are in place. (5) This is the building team after the day's work. Crew consisted of 16 Navy steelworkers, 18 Vietnamese workers and a crane operator. (6) Seabee teamwork goes into play in the tricky and delicate operation of setting an assembled frame into place. Here, the third frame is being placed after about 30 minutes on the job.





CATMEN of USS Oriskany hook catapult bridle as plane is readied for mission. Rt: Cargo is offloaded at Da Nang.



DESTROYERS give gunfire support.



## View from the Front: Vietnam

Rounding out the headlines from the latest news from Southeast Asia is this series of reports of varied Navy activity in Vietnam. ALL HANDS continues to report the background story that comes directly from Navy ships and units on the scene.

### Scratch Two Migs

Commander Harold L. Marr is handy with scissors, as he proved recently in the skies over North Vietnam. In this case, of course, the scissors were not the cloth-ripping kind, but a nickname for a type of dogfight maneuver, which usually re-

sults in the ripping up of one of the aircraft involved.

It happened about 31 miles north of Haiphong, when four Mig-17s attacked a flight of F8 Crusaders from the carrier USS Hancock (CVA 19). Chalk up a Mig for CDR Marr.

The four Crusaders were flying combat air patrol, protecting A4 Skyhawks bombing the Dai Tan military complex, when the Migs came at them.

As the Migs made a low run attack from below the Crusaders, the Navy flyers broke into their formation, and there ensued a three- or four-minute dogfight, with all eight jets turning

and twisting at high speeds.

CDR Marr got the advantage of one of the Migs, and launched his Sidewinder missiles at him. The first missed the mark, but the second sent the Mig crashing to the ground.

Then CDR Marr found himself astern a second Mig. Having run out of Sidewinders, he began firing his 20mm cannon at the enemy fighter. He later reported that he was chewing on the Mig's starboard wingtip when he ran out of ammo and had to return to the ship.

If CDR Marr's wingman, Lieutenant (jg) Philip V. Vampatella, was disappointed in not getting one of

the Migs himself, his disappointment was not to last long. Less than two weeks later, he got one of his own.

His was one of four F8 Crusaders flying protective cover for the pilot of a downed F8 photo plane. Vampatella's Crusader was hit by ground fire, which tore off part of his plane's tail section.

With his aircraft damaged, Vampatella started back to Hancock. Meanwhile, four Mig-17s attacked the Crusaders that remained over the downed flyer. Hearing the alert, Vampatella turned back.

Although his plane was badly damaged, and difficult to control at high speed, he remained in the fight until his fuel was so low that he could stay no longer.

As he broke away and headed back to the ship, one of the Migs trailed him. Vampatella went to afterburner, and finally saw the pursuing aircraft make a turn to the left, giving up the chase.

At this point, Vampatella turned his Crusader to a firing position, and let loose a Sidewinder missile, which went up the tail pipe of the Mig, leaving it burning and trailing smoke in a steep descending turn.

Vampatella then returned to his ship.

### Single-handed

A Skyhawk pilot from the carrier USS Ranger (CVA 61) flew his

111th combat sortie with a shoulder full of shrapnel, and was awarded a Silver Star as a result.

Just as Commander Milton J. Chewning, Commanding Officer of Attack Squadron 55, passed over the coast of North Vietnam, a burst of antiaircraft fire exploded outside the cockpit of his Skyhawk. The explosion hurled fragments of shrapnel through the cockpit, hitting the pilot in the shoulder and leaving his right arm useless.

Instead of returning to the carrier immediately, CDR Chewning continued with his mission, shooting up a road target. He then headed for the carrier.

When Ranger's commanding officer learned of the pilot's shoulder wound, he prepared the ship for an emergency landing. A flight surgeon was stationed aloft in a helicopter, and another on the flight deck. All emergency rescue equipment stood by.

Despite his problems, CDR Chewning's landing was near-perfect.

### Many Forms of Gunfire Support

Seventh Fleet destroyers are being called upon continuously to provide gunfire support for U.S. and South Vietnamese troops engaged in combat near the coast of South Vietnam.

From the ground troops' point of view, these destroyers and their

five-inchers are handy to have around, whether you're trying to beat off an attack on your outpost, or you're launching your own offensive.

USS Richard E. Kraus (DD 849), John W. Thomason (DD 760), and Dyess (DDR 880) are some of the DDs that have been there when ground troops called for support.

Kraus recently received an honor known by few ships, when a bridge north of Da Nang was named, unofficially, by the defending troops in her honor.

Frequently during a three-day mission, Kraus provided the necessary punch to allow the troops to defend the bridge successfully against repeated attacks by the Viet Cong.

As a direct result of Kraus' pinpoint accuracy with her gunfire, the bridge remained open and in friendly hands.

In a two-hour bombardment, John W. Thomason destroyed a Viet Cong complex near Tuy Oa, South Vietnam, her juiciest target since she began gunfire support missions.

The target was a trail leading along a high ridge and down into a pass between two hills, the suspected route of a concentration of Viet Cong troops.

As Thomason began firing at the ridge, an airborne Army spotter

BIG BIRD GOES HUNTING—P-5 Marlin takes off near tender USS Salisbury Sound to patrol Vietnamese coast.







**HOT SPOT**—Copters deliver Marines for clearing operations south of Chu Lai.

"walked" the five-inch projectiles along the ridge and into the pass. Then the spotter directed *Thomason's* fire at the Viet Cong headquarters at the end of the trail.

No sooner had *Thomason* finished firing at the ridge line than she was requested to take a Viet Cong camp.

The camp lay along a secluded inlet, almost completely covered by foliage. The inlet was jammed with small boats, and as *Thomason* began firing, columns of water and shattered boats were blown high into the air.

Three large secondary explosions were observed in the camp, followed by a tremendous fireball and a column of dense smoke, probably resulting from a hidden gasoline storage area.

At the end of the mission, *Thomason* received word that she had destroyed 45 structures, damaged 20 others, and destroyed 25 small boats.

*Dyess* provided bombardment from a shipping channel in the lower Rung Sat area, firing in support of search and clear operations by South Vietnamese army units.

Several times *Dyess* was hastily summoned from her up-channel position to lend emergency support to South Vietnamese troops attacking a large Viet Cong camp 20 miles up the coast from Vung Tao. On one such occasion, *Dyess* destroyed structures, earthen emplacements, silenced ground fire directed at the spotter, and left a number of Viet Cong casualties.

#### Doc Speaks the Language

When the cry "Get the Doc up here!" rings out, it usually means there is a wounded Marine or Vietnamese soldier to be attended. Not always.

If that particular corpsman's name is Louis L. Piatetsky, HM3, it could mean there is a prisoner to be questioned, for Doc Ski also acts as the unofficial interpreter and interrogator.

Piatetsky's command of Vietnamese, learned at a language school on Okinawa, has enabled him a number of times to question prisoners and possible Viet Cong suspects.

"I think my greatest help to the company," says Piatetsky, "is when we pass through a village on sweeps. I question the villagers to find where the VC hide, where there is drinking water, and if any mines or booby traps are in the area."

When not administering to the wounded, Piatetsky can usually be found in a Vietnamese village administering to the medical needs of the people.

In many villages he is known as "Bac-se Lou," meaning Doctor Lou. He has struck up a friendship with a Vietnamese corpsman who helps further his knowledge of Vietnamese. Whenever he can, Piatetsky uses the language and tries to learn new words and phrases.

#### Seventh Fleet Carriers at Work

As most people know, launching air strikes against North and South Vietnamese targets is a continuing job, with little rest for the carrier's crew, or her embarked air wing.

*USS Intrepid* (CVS 11), and *Constellation* (CVA 64) have been par-

**IT'S A LARK**—LARC rolls off LCU during Operation Hastings to deliver supplies upriver to Dong Ha airstrip.





ticularly busy lately.

Atlantic-based *Intrepid* found her first month of operations as an attack carrier with the Seventh Fleet a little hectic. The day *Intrepid* arrived on station she launched her first strikes against enemy targets. In the ensuing weeks her pilots flew more than 2400 aerial sorties, and dropped some 2700 tons of bombs.

During a 31-day period, the carrier went alongside replenishment ships 50 different times, often next to the same ships two or three times the same day. The pattern was set by the air operations schedule, which called for launch and recovery at short intervals. *Intrepid* would go alongside and begin the required replenishment, interrupt it when planes were launched or recovered, then go back to filling up as soon as the aircraft cycle was completed.

The Fleet oilers, which fastened their lines to *Intrepid* about every third day, pumped nearly five million gallons of fuel oil and aviation fuels into the carrier's storage tanks. Of the aviation fuels, some 2.1 million gallons were consumed by *Intrepid's* A1 *Skyraider* and A4 *Skyhawk* aircraft.

In ammunition transfer, the carrier took aboard more than 2300 tons of bombs, rockets, 20mm machine gun bullets, and related ordnance items.

Replenishment ships highlined nearly 700 tons of food and stores to the flattop. During the period, the ship steamed more than 10,500 miles in her operations on Dixie station—operations reportedly executed without a hitch.

*Constellation*, a recent returnee to the South China Sea, has been rack-

MAKING ROOM—Harbor Clearance Team raises river steamer sunk in 1945.

ing up some statistics of her own. In her first nine days on station, Carrier Air Wing 15's total confirmed bomb damage assessment included the destruction or damage of 117 water vehicles, 74 buildings, 32 railroad cars, and 21 motor vehicles.

Some rail tracks were ripped up, in places for as much as 300 yards, eight petroleum-oil-lubricant (POL) sites were hit, one ammunition depot and a fighter control radar site destroyed, and at least three *Sam* or antiaircraft sites destroyed or damaged.

*Constellation* crewmen feel that's not bad for openers.

#### By the Deep, Fire

Navymen manning hydrographic soundboats are normally more concerned with measuring the depth of shallow offshore waters than firing a machine gun at an enemy dug in on the beach. But a soundboat crew

from *USS Maury* (AGS 16) proved recently that they are at home in either instance.

*Soundboat 7* was running sounding lines near Chu Lai, when she was taken under fire by automatic weapons from the beach, about 150 yards away.

Crewmembers on the soundboat were quick to return the fire with small arms. The coxswain swung the shallow-draft boat around to withdraw from the beach just as a second burst cut across the bow at deck-house level. Several bullets struck the craft, one of which passed through a window and just missed a fathometer operator. *Soundboat 7's* crew silenced the enemy with fire from her 50-caliber machine gun.

The officer in charge of the soundboat credited his crew's quick reaction in manning their stations and returning fire for holding damage to a minimum and averting casualties.

NIGHT AND DAY—*USS White River* (LSMR 536), with firepower of four destroyers, fires in support of troops ashore.





## Seeing the Sights in Thailand

**R**ECENTLY the Commander of the Seventh Fleet made a protocol visit to Thailand. This involved a port call to Bangkok for the admiral's temporary flagship, the guided missile destroyer *USS Buchanan* (DDG 14).

The moral: It is good to serve aboard a COMSEVENTH FLEET flagship.

Full day tours of the city were arranged for the 350 *Buchanan* Navy-men. Bangkok has long been a tourist attraction. Among other sights, a visitor can find no less than 300 temples within the city, including the Wat Trimitr with its five-and-one-half-ton solid gold Buddha.

Bangkok was once called the Venice of the East, but most of the

klongs (canals, to Westerners) which once served as city streets have been filled to make room for modern highways. Some remain, however, and the guided tours took *Buchanan* Navy-men to visit a floating market via water taxi.

The more ambitious Navy tourists climbed the steep steps of the Temple of the Dawn for a view of Bangkok's skyline along the Chao Phraya River. Further upriver were the royal state barges, a small fleet of elaborately carved and decorated wooden boats, once used by Siamese kings for visits to the country areas.

Another popular sight was the Grand Palace and the adjoining Temple of the Emerald Buddha. The temple contains intricate ex-

amples of ancient Thai, Laotian and Cambodian architecture.

Visits to the market places were also popular.

Clockwise from Upper Left: (1) Touring Navy-men view royal barges. (2) Floating market outside Bangkok has produce brought in from jungle farms. (3) Royal Thai Navy chief teaches *Buchanan* sailors Thai formal greeting. (4) Unusual architecture is explained by guide. (5) Local monkey business. (6) Some saw the famous Thai silk being woven. (7) A look-see at the Golden Buddha at Wat Trimitr. (8) Destroyermen shop for a jewelry bargain. (9) Colorful Bangkok was recorded on film by many. (10) Climbing steps at Temple of Dawn.

