

CHRONOLOGY - 1970

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- 03 JAN CDR R. G. DUFF, USN relieved CDR J. W. EHL, USN, as Executive Officer of HA(L)-3.
- 04 JAN CDR J. T. CARSON, USN, relieved LCDR R. F. HABICHT, USN, as Officer in Charge of HA(L)-3, Detachment ONE.
- 14 JAN LCDR C. R. THOMAS, USN, relieved LCDR W. B. LESTER, USN, as Officer in Charge of HA(L)-3, Detachment EIGHT.
- 23 JAN Four additional UH-1L's arrived at Navy Binh Thuy. This completes the allowance of eight Sealords Aircraft employed for logistic support of CTG 194.0.
- 25 JAN HA(L)-3 assumed CTU 194.0.3 vice CTG 116.8.
- 06 FEB HA(L)-3 DETACHMENTS ONE, THREE, SIX, and EIGHT commenced night staging ashore at the following locations because of impracticability of LST night operations in the Gulf of Thailand:
- (1) DETACHMENT ONE, Seafloat
 - (2) DETACHMENT THREE, Chau CIDG Camp
 - (3) DETACHMENT SIX, Song Ong Doc
 - (4) DETACHMENT EIGHT, Rach Gia
- 20 FEB Cambodian officials returned three boxes purportedly containing the remains of three U.S. Navy helicopter crewmen who were killed when their aircraft crashed in Cambodia on 28 April 1969. Examinations revealed the partial remains of LTJG Hal C. CASTLE and AO3 Michael E. SCHAFERNOCKLER. A request is being made for a search to locate the remains of the third crewman, LTJG Richard J. RARDON.
- 09 MAR USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST-786) relieved USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST-816) on station off the Ha Tien Coast.
- 21 MAR LCDR R. L. REDMAN, USN, relieved LCDR L. L. LEBERT, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment SEVEN at Ben Luc.
- 28 MAR USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST-821) celebrated the 6000th accident-free helicopter recovery.
- 29 MAR At 0125 Detachment THREE staging from Vinh Gia and Detachment FIVE staging off the YNSM-16 at Chau Doc were called to help repel an enemy attack at Special Forces Camp B-43, Chi Lang. Detachment THREE placed two strikes and Detachment FIVE four strikes until relieved by an Army Light Helicopter Fire Team at 0430. At 0225 Detachment THREE was diverted to support Special Forces Camp A-421 at Ba Xoi, which was under enemy attack. Two air strikes were made there until relieved by an Army LHT at 0430.

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- 01 APR LCDR John M. PEEPLES, USN, relieved LCDR Victor BECK, USN, as OINC of Detachment SIX on the USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 826).
- 06 APR CDR Weslie W. METZEL, USN, relieved CDR Ward E. K. SERIG, USN, as Operations Officer, of HA(L)-3.
- 11 APR CDR Michael A. ARTUSO, USN, relieved CDR William J. PRICE, USN, as OINC of Detachment TWO in Nha Be.
- 13 APR Aircraft 315 assigned to Det THREE ditched in the Gulf of Thailand while making an approach to the USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786). The cause was determined to be failure of the tail rotor linkage with full right rudder applied. There were no injuries sustained.
- 14 APR Captain Martin J. TWITE, Jr., USN, relieved Captain Reynolds BECKWITH, USN, as Commanding Officer of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE.
- 26 APR Aircraft 857 (SEALORDS 7) crashed at Long Phu, RVN. The most probable cause of the accident was considered to be loss of tail rotor control due to a material failure of unknown origin. AMS1 David C. BRANNON, 477 29 40, USN, was treated for minor injuries and released.
- 01 MAY LCDR Gerald M. WEBER, USN, relieved LCDR Christopher R. THOMAS, USN, as OINC of Detachment EIGHT, aboard the USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST 838), at Long Xuyen.
- 08 MAY Detachment FIVE was relocated from the YRBM 16 at Chau Doc, to the YRBM 20 at Chau Doc. The YRBM 16 was later used as support vessel for the Sealords aircraft in Tran Hung Dao XI.
- 08 MAY The USS HUNTERDON COUNTY, with Detachment EIGHT embarked, moved from Long Xuyen to a position one mile south of the Cambodian border on the Mekong River, in conjunction with operation Tran Hung Dao XI.
- 09 MAY Operation Tran Hung Dao XI was commenced at 0700, with First Sealords elements penetrating into Cambodia along the Mekong River to the Neak Luong ferry landing 21.7 miles up river from the border. Detachment EIGHT, stationed aboard the USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST 838), assumed the duties of primary tactical air support for the naval units inside Cambodia, with Detachments NINE and FIVE acting as secondary and reserve units respectively. The three Detachments, under extreme pressure as the only ready reaction unit in the Cambodian operation, logged 748 flight hours in the execution of numerous strike missions, while being credited with the destruction of shelters, bunkers, sampans and several mortar positions.

HA(L)-3 pilots and crewmen stationed in Binh Thuy were also required for Tran Hung Dao XI, as seven Sealords aircraft performed missions varying from passenger pickups to emergency medevacs and body snatches. A new Navy flight time record was set for the Binh Thuy Sealords aircraft with a total of 961 hours. Average UH-1L utilization time established was also the highest in squadron history; 137.3 hours per aircraft.

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- 09 MAY Detachment TWO was divided into two Light Fire Teams, with one team being transferred from Nha Be to Binh Thuy to assume the duties of Detachment EIGHT, in Rach Gia.
- 14 MAY CDR Thomas H. STARBUCK, USN, relieved CDR Robert C. STRANGE, USN, as Officer-in-Charge of Detachment FIVE aboard the YRBM 20, at Chau Doc.
- 18 MAY LCDR Stephen A. FIELD, USN, relieved LCDR Dennis R. LEE, USN, as OINC of Detachment THREE, on the USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786), off the coast of Ha Tien.
- 19 MAY CDR Robert C. STRANGE, USN, relieved CDR Arthur F. SCHMITT, USN, as Administrative Officer, at Binh Thuy.
- 22 MAY Seawolf 302, assigned to Detachment SIX, was forced down after taking large caliber hits through the fuselage. No injuries were sustained; however, due to enemy ground fire, the aircraft was destroyed by TACTICAL AIR after the extraction of the crew.
- 23 MAY CDR Arthur F. SCHMITT, USN, relieved CDR James T. CARSON, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment ONE, at Seafloat.
- 24 MAY Seawolf 323, attached to Detachment SIX, experienced a separation of a large portion of the trailing edge of one main rotor blade. No injuries were sustained in the forced landing.
- 30 MAY LCDR Melvin L. ADEN, USN, was relieved by LCDR Hugh J. WYNN, USN, as officer in Charge of Detachment NINE, on the YRBM 21, at An Long.
- 31 MAY CDR James W. EHL, USN, was relieved by CDR James T. CARSON, USN, as Maintenance Officer at Binh Thuy.
- 01 JUN A Sealord Aircraft, Bureau Number 157851, crashed while entering the local landing pattern at Navy Binh Thuy. All occupants of the aircraft; LT John M. MULCAHY, USN, AO1 Lloyd L. BOWLES, USN, and AMS1 Wilbur D. FRAHM, USN, perished in the crash.
- 16 JUN Due to the increased activity in the Seafloat Area of Operations, Detachment ONE was assigned an additional aircraft and additional personnel. Subsequently the extra aircraft has been withdrawn because of space limitations. However, Detachment ONE retained the personnel and flight hours allocated for three aircraft.
- 30 JUN Operation Tran Hung Dao XI was officially terminated with the withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Cambodia. Participating in this operation were Detachments THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SEVEN, EIGHT, and NINE conducting close air support, and Sealord Aircraft from Binh Thuy in Command and Control Ship and logistic roles. In addition, other detachments were affected in that Detachment TWO redeployed one fire team to cover Detachment EIGHT's Area of Operations, and pilots and crewmen were drawn from other

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Detachments to beef up the involved Detachments. Detachments FOUR and SEVEN were involved in the Parrots Beak Operation during the early part of the Cambodian Operation.

- 05 JUL Due to the failure of a transmission oil pump seal, Seawolf 325, attached to Detachment NINE, was forced down northwest of Cao Lanh. The crew was successfully extracted by Detachment FIVE without further incident. Popular Forces established a perimeter around the downed aircraft while Black Pony Aircraft provided air cover until it was hooked out the following morning.
- 09 JUL The USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST-846) relieved the USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) on station off Song Ong Doc, serving Detachment SIX.
- 18 JUL The USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST-838) relieved the USS GARNETT COUNTY (LST 786) on station off the Ha Tien Coast, serving Detachment THREE.
- 22 JUL A late report from action on 27 June indicates that 14 VC NVA were killed during a combined LBR and Seawolf attack at coordinates WR 2274. The LBRs proceeded to the area after receiving a distress call from a MELCAP unit, and Detachment EIGHT was subsequently scrambled when the PBRs came under intense fire. The heavy contact prior to Seawolf involvement and the VC/ NVA withdrawal thereafter, substantiates such a heavy loss. Eight sampans were reported destroyed during the incident.
- 02 AUG The USS WASHON COUNTY (LST-1165), serving Detachment ONE, was relieved by the USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY (LST-1167).
- 03 AUG The USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST-846) reported a fire. Sealords Aircraft were sent to the scene with foam and other fire fighting equipment to aid personnel on board. There were no casualties to HA(L)-3 Detachment SIX personnel aboard. Detachment SIX relocated ashore at Song Ong Doc.
- 05 AUG Detachment THREE, relocated from Ha Tien to Ca Mau, in conjunction with the move of the USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST-838) to Song Ong Doc.
- 13 AUG A Sealord Aircraft, Bureau Number 157856, crashed while lifting from HA(L)-3 pad at Navy Binh Thuy. All occupants of the aircraft egressed safely.
- 18 AUG LCDR Richard E. DANIELS, USN, relieved LCDR John M. PEEPLES, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment SIX at Song Ong Doc.
- 19 AUG LCDR John M. PEEPLES, USN, relieved LCDR Robert L. REEDMAN, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment SEVEN at Ben Luc.
- 20 AUG Detachments THREE and ONE assisted Detachment SIX in performing a SEAL extraction and other tactical air operations in the Song Ong Doc Area.

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- 01 SEP Detachment ONE relocated from Seafloat to Solid Anchor.
- 14 SEP Seawolf 308 crash landed near Navy Binh Thuy while on a maintenance test hop. The cause is believed to be a partial power loss. All occupants egressed safely. Minor damage to the aircraft was sustained.
- 15 SEP Seawolf 312, assigned to Detachment SIX, and Seawolf 313, assigned to Detachment ONE, were shot down and destroyed by direct enemy action while escorting an Army Medevac Helicopter at approximate coordinates VQ 9595 in the vicinity of VC Lake. The pilot of Seawolf 312, LTJG William A. PEDERSON, USNR, 736976 and a crewman, ADJ3 Jose P. RAMOS, USN, B73 23 72, were killed in the resulting crash. The co-pilot of Seawolf 312, LTJG William L. FORD, USNR, 730982, and the second crewman AMS3 James P. PLONA, USN, B51 25 21, were seriously injured in the crash. LTJG FORD was medevaced to Long Binh and AMS3 PLONA was medevaced to Army 3rd Surgical Hospital, Binh Thuy.
- 15 SEP LT Thomas G. HELINTZELMAN, USNR, relieved LCDR Stephen A. FILL, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment THREE at Ca Mau.
- 21 SEP Seawolf 314, assigned to Detachment SEVEN, made a hard landing while practicing stuck rudder procedures at Dong Tam. The crew egressed safely and minor damage to the aircraft resulted.
- 30 SEP Detachment SEVEN relocated to Dong Tam from Ben Luc.
- 03 OCT LCDR James A. CAIDWELL, USN, relieved CDR Kenneth A. HAMMON, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment FOUR at Ben Luc.
- 03 OCT Seawolf 306, Bureau Number 624579, assigned to Detachment THREE, crash landed at Ca Mau Strip. ATR2 Walter R. WINTERS, USN, 4871478, a crewman in the aircraft, was killed. The remaining crew egressed safely. The aircraft was totally destroyed by fire. Cause of the crash was an engine failure.
- 12 OCT A Sealord Aircraft, Bureau Number 157855, crashed North of Vi Thanh when the pilot executed an auto-rotation into a rice paddy after sustaining an engine failure. All occupants of the aircraft egressed safely. The aircraft sustained substantial damage.
- 12 OCT Detachment NINE began staging from YRBM 21. Detachment relocated from Moc Hoa due to seasonal high water preventing air operations.
- 15 OCT LCDR Richard G. STRAND, USN, relieved LT Terry L. Campbell, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment NINE aboard YRBM 21.
- 20 OCT ATSD at Song Ong Doc came under enemy attack at approximately 2330 receiving heavy mortar, automatic weapons, and rocket fire. Detachment SIX scrambled after the first mortar barrage and commenced immediate strikes on enemy target of opportunity. No casualties to Detachment SIX personnel were sustained. As a result of the action, the Detachment was relocated to the US GARRETT COUNTY (LAT-7841

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- 24 OCT Seawolf 305, Bureau Number 638545, assigned to Detachment ONE, sustained an engine failure near Nam Cam. The pilot executed an auto-rotation to the bank of the Bo De River. All occupants egressed safely. Aircraft sustained salt water damage to control tubes and electrical wiring.
- 01 NOV LCDR Duane R. STEINER, USN, relieved CDR Arthur F. SCHMITT, Jr., USN, as OINC of Detachment ONE at Solid Anchor, Nam Cam.
- 01 NOV CDR Stanley BRIGGS, USN, relieved CDR Michael A. ARTUSO, USN, as OINC of Detachment TWO at Nha Be.
- 07 NOV A Seawolf UH-1B, Bureau Number 6212542, assigned to Detachment EIGHT, made an emergency landing into a rice paddy south of Rach Gia after experiencing complete loss of transmission oil pressure. No damage was sustained to the aircraft and all occupants egressed safely.
- 10 NOV LCDR Richard S. GORDON, USN, relieved LCDR John M. PEEPLES, USN, as OINC of Detachment SEVEN at Dong Tam.
- 11 NOV A Seawolf UH-1B, Bureau Number 622038, assigned to Detachment SIX, sustained an engine failure from a two-foot hover at Ca Mau. Resulting damage was to the engine only and all occupants egressed safely.
- 12 NOV A Seawolf UH-1B, Bureau Number 6008715, assigned to Detachment TWO, sustained limited damage to cross tubes and skids resulting from a hard landing after pilot executed a fast approach to a landing at Phu Hoi. All occupants egressed safely.
- 15 NOV A Seaford UH-1L, Bureau Number 157853, assigned to HA(L)-3 at Binh Thuy, sustained limited damage, destruction of engine, resulting from compressor explosion and subsequent engine failure from a one-foot hover at Solid Anchor. All occupants egressed safely. Cause of compressor explosion unknown.
- 15 NOV A Seawolf UH-1B, Bureau Number 638540, assigned to Detachment THREE, sustained limited damage to skids and destruction of engine resulting from compressor explosion and subsequent engine failure while taxiing at Ca Mau. Pilot cushioned landing and all occupants egressed safely. Cause of compressor explosion unknown.
- 15 NOV LT James E. JOPLIN, Jr., USN, relieved LCDR Gerald M. WEBER, USN, as OINC of Detachment EIGHT at Rach Gia.
- 16 NOV A Seawolf UH-1B, Bureau Number 6412934, assigned to Detachment SEVEN, was completely destroyed on impact with a dike line near Dong Tam. Pilot experienced loss of rotor turns. All occupants egressed safely. Cause was undetermined pending results of the investigation.
- 26 NOV A Seaford HH-1K, Bureau Number 157203, assigned to HA(L)-3 at Binh Thuy, sunk irretrievably after ditching at sea in the Gulf of Thailand off Song Ong Doc. All occupants egressed safely. Cause undetermined pending investigation.

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- 28 NOV LCDR Lynn C. KEHRLI, USN, relieved CDR William S. MUNRO, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment FIVE aboard YHBM 20.
- 29 NOV A Sealord UH-1L, Bureau Number 157852, assigned to HA(L)-3 at Binh Thuy, sustained an engine flame-out while on the deck of the USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST-786) off Song Ong Doc. All occupants egressed safely.
- 13 DEC LCDR Paul M. HOFFMAN, USN, relieved LCDR Richard F. DANIELS, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment SIX aboard the USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786) off the Song Ong Doc River.
- 16 DEC Seawolf 316, Bureau Number 022038, assigned to Detachment THREE made a hard landing resulting in limited damage to skids, after practice autorotation at Solid Anchor. There were no personal injuries.
- 16 DEC A Seawolf UH-1B, Bureau Number 638540, assigned to Detachment THREE, sustained limited damage to skids resulting from a hard landing at Ca Mau Long Strip while maneuvering into position at the POL. There no personal injuries.
- 16 DEC A Seawolf UH-1B, Bureau Number 622034, assigned to Detachment SIX sustained limited damage to the synchronized elevator after experiencing an engine failure during take off at old Song Ong Doc. There were no personal injuries.
- 19 DEC Seawolf 312, Bureau Number 631429, crashed at co-ordinates WR 312426, southeast of Kien Long while enroute to Ca Mau from Binh Thuy. Aircraft hit ground inverted. The pilot, co-pilot, and two crewmen were killed in the crash.
- 25 DEC LCDR Michael B. O'CONNOR, Jr., USN, relieved LT Thomas G. HEINTZELMAN, USN, as Officer in Charge of Detachment THREE at Ca Mau.
- 26 DEC A Seawolf UH-1B, Bureau Number 622038, assigned to Detachment ONE, sustained limited damage after receiving two hits from enemy fire at the approximate coordinates of WQ 073566. The aircraft sustained a .50 cal. round through the main rotor and a .50 cal. round through the tail pylon. The crew was uninjured.

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