

U.S.S. GARRETT COUNTY (LST-786)

FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

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17 MAR 1968

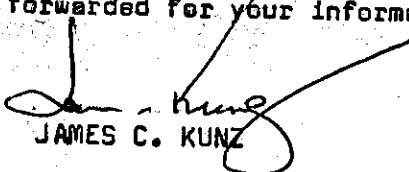
From: Commanding Officer, USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST-786)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP0989)

Subj: Command History; submission of (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12
(b) CINCPACFLTINST 5750.2

Encl: (1) Chronology of Highlights
(2) Basic Narrative
(3) Documentary Annexes

1. In accordance with the procedures outlined in references (a) and (b), enclosures (1) through (3) are forwarded for your information and retention.


JAMES C. KUNZ

Copy to:
CINCPACFLT
COMPHIBPAC
COMLANSHIPFLOT ONE

CHRONOLOGY OF HIGHLIGHTS

The year commenced with the ship moored to Pier 9 at the San Diego Naval Station prior to three weeks of specialized PBR and helo training along with the amphibious training required of all LSTs.

26 JAN - Underway from San Diego to Hawaii enroute to duty to Vietnam

17 MAR - Reported to Commander Naval Forces Vietnam for duty as Game Warden support ship

16 OCT - Underway for Subic Bay, P. I. for upkeep and repairs

24 NOV - Rest and Recreation in Hong Kong

7 DEC - Resumed duty as Game Warden support ship.

Enclosure (1)

BASIC NARRATIVE

The year 1967 began for GARRETT COUNTY at Pier 9 of the San Diego Naval Station following four weeks of shakedown and refresher training. After three weeks of specialized PBR and helo training along with the amphibious training required of all LSTs, the ship sailed from San Diego for Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on 26 January 1967 enroute to the western Pacific and duty in Vietnam. Sailing in company with USS BULLOCK COUNTY (LST-509) the ship arrived in Hawaii on 5 February and sailed for Guam on 7 February. Prior to sailing from the states, GARRETT COUNTY had loaded twenty Marine bulldozers for delivery to Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam. In Hawaii two Navy buses were loaded on the ship's main deck for delivery to Vietnam.

GARRETT COUNTY arrived in Guam in the Mariana Islands on 22 February and underwent an eight day upkeep and maintenance availability at the Naval Ship Repair Facility.

From Guam she sailed on 2 March for Chu Lai in Vietnam. A boiler casualty enroute forced a two day emergency stop in Subic Bay, P. I., for repairs.

Arriving in Chu Lai on 14 March 1967 the ship off-loaded her cargo at Cus Ho LST ramp and sailed the same night for Vung Tau in company with USS KEMPER COUNTY (LST-854). The two ships sailed to Cua Viet where KEMPER COUNTY took part in a pioneer amphibious effort against an enemy held beach. GARRETT COUNTY stood by as support element until the beach was secured. The landing went smoothly and the ship sailed alone for Vung Tau the night of 15 March.

The ship arrived in Vung Tau on 17 March and reported to Commander Naval Forces Vietnam for duty. After a ten day tender availability along side USS TUTUILA (ARG-4) she sailed 15 miles south to the mouth of the Soi Rap River, embarked River Patrol Section 543, and began full operations as a Game Warden (River Patrol Force) support ship.

GARRETT COUNTY departed station on 21 April and proceeded to Saigon via the Long Tau River to host the Commander Naval Forces Vietnam Change of Command Ceremony on board on 27 April. RADM Kenneth L. VETH relieved RADM Norvell G. WARD as Commander Naval Forces Vietnam/Chief Naval Advisory Group. Visitors to the ship for the ceremony included the Deputy U. S. Military Commander in Vietnam, the Vietnamese Chief of Naval Operations, Commandant of the Vietnamese Marine Corps, and some 25 additional allied officers of flag and general rank.

The ship returned to station in the Soi Rap on 28 April and resumed operations, until 9 May when River Patrol Section 543 disembarked and the ship proceeded to Vung Tau for another availability alongside USS TUTUILA. USS JENNINGS COUNTY assumed duties as Soi Rap River support ship.

Enclosure (2)

The ship departed Vung Tau on 27 May and sailed south to the Bassac River to relieve USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST-838). River Section 511 consisting of 10 river patrol boats and Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron 3 Detachment 1 with two armed UH-1B "Seawolf" helicopters embarked on 28 May.

While on station in the Bassac River GARRETT COUNTY moved from the river mouth to a point some 30 miles upriver where she operated for the next five months. During this period the ship staged combat patrols and some 200 helo missions were launched from the ship. On 4 October GARRETT COUNTY's flight deck logged its 1000th helo landing. The embarked River Patrol Section accounted for over 60 Viet Cong killed and countless wounded.

In addition to staging regular PBR patrols and helo operations, the ship also proved to be a versatile command and control center and staging area for numerous special operations in the delta. A clandestine amphibious assault on the Long Toan Secret Zone and several SEAL and other special operations were launched from the ship. GARRETT COUNTY participated in Operations Backdoor, Shallow Draft IV, Crimson Tide I and II, and Operation Longshot.

At 1720, 21 August a helo attached to Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron 3, Detachment 5 experienced fuel pump failure and ditched into the Bassac River approximately 500 yards astern of GARRETT COUNTY. The ship's LCVP was dispatched and recovered all four crewmen. Dragging operations were begun immediately, and the wreckage was located late the next day. A demolition team arrived and destroyed the sunken helicopter.

At 0232, 1 September during a night scramble mission in support of a Vietnamese Army outpost under attack, a helicopter piloted by LCDR Robert Dennison JOHNSON, USN, 626423 crashed into the Bassac River immediately after takeoff as a result of the pilot experiencing vertigo. PBRs and an LCVP quickly rescued two crewmen; copilot LT Algirdas V. BACANSKIS, USN, 644322, and doorgunner AE3 Douglas Wayne LEAF, USN, 99B 52 96. LEAF suffered multiple facial contusions and was medevaced to Vung Tau while BACANSKIS, who suffered facial contusions, was treated onboard. The pilot and doorgunner ADJ1 Edward Louis OTT III, USN, 407 55 83 were not recovered.

On 17 September ADM Roy L. JOHNSON, Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri came aboard GARRETT COUNTY. The official party, which included RADM Kenneth L. VETH, Commander Naval Forces, Vietnam, and RADM James R. REEDY, ADM JOHNSON'S Chief of Staff, witnessed a demonstration of river warfare weapons and tactics that included an air strike by UH-1B "Seawolf" helicopters attached to the ship, a PBR demonstration, and a demonstration of U. S. Navy SEAL Team weapons.

A similar visit was made by RADM Henry L. MILLER, Chief of Information, on 30 September. He also viewed a demonstration of river warfare, weapons and tactics.

When relieved by USS JENNINGS COUNTY as Bassac River Game Warden support ship on 15 October, GARRETT COUNTY had completed the longest continuous on-station assignment since the inauguration of Operation Game Warden.

On 16 October GARRETT COUNTY disembarked River Patrol Section 522 and Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron 3, Detachment 1, and sailed for Subic Bay, Republic of Philippines for upkeep and repairs, arriving at Subic Bay on 20 October. Following this maintenance period the ship sailed for Hong Kong on 21 November for five days of rest and relaxation, the first scheduled R and R period for the ship since it sailed from San Diego.

On 20 November the ship sailed for Vung Tau, Republic of Vietnam arriving on 3 December. Following transfer of a cargo of ship's store items to USS BLANCO COUNTY (LST-344), GARRETT COUNTY sailed with BLANCO COUNTY up the My Tho River on 5 December. After River Patrol Section 522 embarked at My Tho on 6 December, the ship moved three miles upriver to Dong Tam and embarked Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron 3 Detachment 4.

On 7 December GARRETT COUNTY assumed duties as Game Warden support ship on the Co Chien River. Throughout December the ship ranged up and down the Co Chien frequently conducting 40MM cannon shore bombardment in support of ARVN ground operations and as a harassment measure. In addition, SEAL operations were again staged from the ship.

On 13 December the crew of a River Patrol Section 522 PBR rescued one of two crewmen who ejected from an Air Force F-4C Phantom II jet shortly before it plunged into the Co Chien River, about 2800 yards from GARRETT COUNTY. The PBR, with Gunner's Mate Second Maurice TURPIN as boat captain, was the first of several small craft dispatched from GARRETT COUNTY to reach the crash scene. The rescued crewman was CAPT William Takeshi Sakahara, USAF, attached to the 558th Attack Fighter Squadron, 12th Fighter Wing, stationed at Cam Ranh Bay.

The year 1967 ended for the nine officers and 132 enlisted men of GARRETT COUNTY and the embarked 12 officers and 68 enlisted men with the ship anchored in the Co Chien River, Republic of Vietnam, quietly observing the New Year truce.

DOCUMENTARY ANNEXES

Exhibit (a) - Ship's company 31 December 1967

Exhibit (b) - Embarked Personnel 31 December 1967

Exhibit (c) - COMNAVFORV Change of Command Program

Exhibit (d) - Operational Data

Exhibit (e) - 1967 News Releases

Enclosure (3)

Exhibit (a)

SHIP'S COMPANY - 31 DECEMBER 1967

CaptainLieutenant James C. KUNZ
Executive Officer.....Lieutenant (junior grade) Craig P. ADRYAN
First Division.....Lieutenant (junior grade) G. R. BRINDEL
G Division.....Ensign R. D. HARR
O Division.....Lieutenant (junior grade) S. P. LUDEMAN
C Division.....Ensign W. R. HUGHES
M Division.....Lieutenant (junior grade) D. DONHAM
R Division.....Lieutenant (junior grade) D. J. GRIEVE
S Division.....Ensign M. W. DUNLEVIE

FIRST DIVISION ENLISTED

BM1 H. D. HINSON	SN W. E. ANDERSON	SN J. L. KIRKLAND
BM2 C. F. GINTHER	SN R. D. BALL	SN D. R. MATTHEWS
BM2 A. HIGGINBOTHAM	SN L. T. BRATTON	SN P. A. MICHAUD
BM2 P. G. NEWBOLD	SN M. L. DRAFER	SA D. D. MONGELLI
BM2 C. RIVERA	SN H. DEAS	SR R. A. MCCRI
BM3 R. L. ALLEN	SN S. K. DUNN	SN U. S. NAVEY
BM3 L. V. ARNOLD	SN K. P. FELL	SN J. SENA
BM3 L. W. QUIGLEY	SN M. E. FULTON	SN P. R. SORNBERGER
BM3 J. R. WAHL	SN H. GUIDRY	SN D. P. STIRES
	SN H. R. HIXON	SN R. J. ST. NICHOLAS
	SN C. L. HOLMES	SN A. D. SIMENSON
	SN F. R. JARAMILLO	

G DIVISION ENLISTED

FTG1 R. L. WEAVER	GMG3 L. L. BOWERS	GMGSN M. M. MCVEY
GMG2 T. FOULOS	GMG3 J. M. MONTENEGRO	FTGSN W. D. QUOLAS
FTG2 F. R. FLACH	GMG3 B. M. WARNER	SN J. R. AUTILIO
		SN R. T. EVANS

O DIVISION ENLISTED

QMC G. RADOSKY
RD1 C. R. MILSTEAD
ET1 T. J. SHAFFER
HM1 J. L. COTTINGHAM
QM2 J. C. SCOTT
SN M. A. CROSS

RD2 M. S. BRANDON
ETN2 C. M. RESSLER
ETR2 F. J. WOOD
HM2 E. RAELS
QM3 J. F. TEEL
ETN3 D. CLSAVAGE

YN3 W. W. JOHNSON
FN3 J. M. BROWN
FN2 S. J. HAYS
FN3 B. B. GRIMES
RDSN A. H. SEVERSON
RDSN J. R. TROTMAN
SN D. K. DRIGGERS

M DIVISION ENLISTED

ENC L. HOOK
EN2 E. L. KEMPF
EN2 R. A. BAILEY
EN2 D. C. KOERBER
EN3 D. E. LARSON
EN3 F. C. RANDLE
EN3 F. T. ROGALINSKI
EN1 J. ROSKOPF
EN1 R. J. SCHUTTA
EN2 J. JONES
EM2 J. H. LIX
EM2 R. L. DAVIS

EN3 T. W. HRDY
EN3 M. H. SADLER
ENFN J. TAYLOR
ENFN K. W. ROBERTS
ENFN R. A. EGGERT
ENFN F. B. BOEING
ENFA J. WOHLMUTH
EM2 L. D. WEYLAND
EN3 L. MAYO
EN3 J. W. SPAETH
EM3 J. D. HICKMAN

FN R. AGEE
FN J. S. COWART
FN E. M. CARTER
FN W. ENGELERT
FN J. D. LUNDSTEN
FA R. T. OLIVER
FN D. N. VERWOERD
FN J. E. ANDERSON
FN T. O. FOX
FN W. T. NOWAKOWSKI
ENFN R. A. WALKUP
ENFN R. P. MARTINO

R DIVISION ENLISTED

EM1 G. O. NETTLES
SF1 R. W. CLINE
SF1 W. SMITH
EM2 J. DELATORRE
MR2 R. C. LEONARD

SFF2 J. L. ALLISON
DC2 D. COLYER
IC2 G. J. VAUGHN
IC3 D. G. KILLIPS

SFMFA J. H. CALAMIA
FN R. A. PIERSON
FA L. E. EMBRY
FN L. C. TEAGUE

S DIVISION ENLISTED

SK1 F. R. FIDERANGA
CS1 L. J. BENSON
CS1 J. W. SANDERS
SK2 R. L. DILLON
DK2 D. E. CRONKHITE
CS2 E. F. EMBREE
CS2 J. M. SAMMONS
SH2 M. J. COLAKERI

CS2 R. L. SALVINO
CS2 K. S. GORDON
CS3 M. D. GLINGER
SH3 J. D. MATHIS
SH3 S. A. ROSS
SKSN D. W. WILSON
CKSN F. L. HUTCHINS
SH2 COFE

SN J. V. OVERTON
SN E. C. BROOM
TN P. R. DELACRUZ
TN J. G. NICOLAS
TN L. S. PARAM
TN J. C. QUITILEN
TN F. G. TANO
TN R. T. TIAMZON

Exhibit (b)

EMBARKED PERSONNEL 31 DECEMBER 1967

Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron 3 Detachment 4

LCDR A. R. CLARK (CINC)
LT W. G. BARNES
LT D. E. HAAN
LTJG H. W. TURNER

LTJG M. S. LOUY
LTJG M. J. BULSON
LTJG T. A. ANZALONE
ENS G. L. MUNSON

AMS1 J. H. JONES, Jr.
CS1 W. H. JOHNSON
ADR2 F. D. MAHANNAH
ADJ3 J. V. HACKMAN

AMS3 A. L. WILSON
ADJAN S. D. GARDINER
AN R. G. KLUJ
AN S. C. FITMAN

River Patrol Section 522

LT J. E. DYKES, Jr., (CINC)
LT DL D. SCHULLER

LTJG R. W. STRANDBERG
WO1 J. T. DUBOSE

ENFN C. R. ACKINS
BMC R. BERTOLUCCI
GMG3 J. BLANFORD
GMG3 D. L. BALDWIN
GMG3 G. A. BOUCHER
GMG3 D. BRISTOW
BM1 F. J. BROWN
GMG3 D. W. CALHOUN
QMCS G. N. CHILDERS
ENFN M. L. CLARK
GMG3 A. F. COURTNEY
YNSN E. W. CROSBY
BM1 L. G. ECKES
BMC R. A. ENTWISLE
GMG3 E. A. ESQUEDA
EN1 R. L. GASKIN
ENS F. GONZALES
BM3 E. GOSSETT
SMC G. S. GOURART
GMG3 W. E. HEINEN
BM1 D. IURATO
GMG2 L. P. JONES
QM1 G. KRAKIE
GMG3 D. W. KING
EM3 N. U. SANDERS
SN J. E. SANSON
QMC J. N. SHAWLIN
SN G. D. SMITH
EN2 L. G. TARVIN
GMG3 R. K. ZIMMERMAN

GMG3 J. W. KEITH
GMG3 J. L. LACKEY
BM1 R. T. LAMB
BM1 A. LAMONTAGNE
EN3 N. J. LATINI
BMSN J. H. LAWLESS
ENFN P. W. LEE
BM1 P. F. LEE
ENFN N. L. LUDREN
SN D. T. MARTINEZ
BM1 H. W. MAUI
SN J. D. MCGOVERN
QMC T. A. MCXEY
GMG3 F. NICHOLASI
EN3 F. M. NCEL
GMG3 R. J. CETERS
YNSN G. OSTREKC
BMC G. J. OXFORD
SN R. D. PAFFORD
ENFN M. G. PALMER
SN C. W. PARRISH
ENFN J. R. FLASTER
EN1 W. M. PURDY
ENFN T. D. ROBERTS
GMG2 M. E. TURPIN
ENFN R. J. WALKER
BMSN D. C. WILSON
GMG2 R. R. WOOTEN
EN3 R. R. WRAY
ENFN G. R. WILLIAMS