

USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST 846)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco 96601

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From: Commanding Officer, USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST 846)
To: Director of Naval History

Subj: Command History; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12 series

Encl: (1) USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST 846) COMMAND HISTORY (REPORT
SYMBOL 5750.1)

1. In compliance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded.


J. F. REESE

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COMMAND HISTORY USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST 846)
DECEMBER 1968 - JANUARY 1970

1. (C) CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS:

- 9 DEC 68 Loss of 5,000 pound bow anchor during routine operations in the Mekong River while in support of River Division 531.
- 29 DEC 68 Several JENNINGS COUNTY families contributed soap, clothing and candy for 524 people in Binh Hoa hamlet. Ship's corpsman treated villagers for minor ailments.
- 1 JAN 69 VADM ZUNKWALT, USN, COMNAVFORV visited the ship.
- 3 JAN 69 RADM HOUSE, USN, First Sealords, visited the ship in the helicopter that logged the 3,000th accident free landing since being recommissioned in 1966.
- 8 JAN 69 VADM STEELE, USN, COMNAVFORKOREA, and RADM ROSENBERG, USN, COMFIEGCU THREE visited and toured the ship.
- 17 JAN 69 River Division 531 was relieved by River Division 554.
- 23 JAN 69 Embarked Seal Team ALPHA, 4th Platoon and Mobile Support Team TWO ALPHA.
- 26 JAN 69 Gypsy Rose Lee came aboard on a USO sponsored tour.
- 3 MAR 69 Relieved on station in the upper Mekong River by USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 766).
- 8 MAR 69 Arrived in Subic Bay, Philippines for RAV.
- 27 MAR 69 Departed Subic Bay, enroute Hong Kong.
- 30 MAR 69 Arrived Hong Kong.
- 5 APR 69 Departed Hong Kong, enroute to station.
- 11 APR 69 Arrived on station in the Bassac River, Republic of Vietnam and embarked River Division 515.

GROUP-4
DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
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10 MAY 69 Captain WEST, USN, COMECONGRUPAC came aboard for a combined PER/ECOD operation.

21 MAY 69 Captain FAULK, USN, prospective CTF 116 came aboard for a visit.

9 JUN 69 Moved to the Mekong River in the vicinity of Tan Chau.

10 JUN 69 Captain FAULK, USN, CTF 116 awarded the Navy Unit Commendation to the ship.

20 JUN 69 RADM D. V. GALLERY, USN RET, noted author, came aboard to obtain material for his new book.

21 JUL 69 JENNINGS COUNTY logged its 3500th accident free helicopter landing.

24 JUL 69 Captain R. B. PEREZ, USN, COMLANSHIPFLOT ONE inspected the ship.

30 JUL 69 JENNINGS COUNTY came alongside USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786) on the Cho Chien River to embark River Division 535 and EA(L) 3 DET 3.

30 AUG 69 Departed Cho Chien River enroute to Rach Gia, Republic of Vietnam.

1 SEP 69 Arrived Rach Gia.

8 SEP 69 LCDR J. P. BENSE, USN relieved LCDR A. VAN HORNE as Commanding Officer, USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST 846).

10 SEP 69 USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786) relieved JENNINGS COUNTY at Rach Gia, Republic of Vietnam. Underway for visit to Hong Kong.

16 SEP 69 Arrived Hong Kong.

22 SEP 69 Departed Hong Kong enroute to Subic Bay, Philippines.

26 SEP 69 Arrived Subic Bay Philippines, commenced RAV.

12 OCT 69 RAV completed, departed Subic Bay enroute to station.

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18 OCT 69

Arrived on station in the Gulf of Thailand at Ha Tien, Republic of Vietnam and came alongside USS HUNTERDON COUNTRY (LST 838) for turn-over. HA(L)-3 DET 3 was embarked and the ship assumed support of River Division 932.

23 OCT 69

Underway for An Whoi, Republic of Vietnam for boat rep with USS MARS (AFS-1).

26 DEC 69

A daybreak ROFS mission was conducted in the vicinity of Ha Tien, Republic of Vietnam.

29 DEC 69

Another ROFS mission was conducted in the vicinity of Ha Tien, Republic of Vietnam.

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2. (C) NARRATIVE: On 9 December 1969 the 5000 pound bow anchor was lost during routine operations in the Mekong River while in support of River Division 531. Transfer of the stern anchor to the bow by LCVP was accomplished, and the spare stern anchor was bent on to the stern wire. At the time of the loss, the ship had anchored nearly 100 times since overhaul; additional stress on the chain resulted from frequent twisting while at anchor for favorable flight quarters conditions and for security purposes. Replacement shots of chain were received later and installed later in December. A replacement bow anchor was ordered. Interim operations using the 3000 pound stern anchor proved satisfactory. On 11 December salvage efforts for the lost anchor were abandoned. Continuous day time searches using an LCVP dragging grappling hooks and salvage equipment proved fruitless.

Several JENNINGS COUNTY families contributed soap, clothing and candy for 324 people in Binh Hoa Hamlet. The ship's landing corpsmen assisted 1 VN doctor, 3 VN corpsman and 1 Army medic on 29 December in distributing the goods and treating the people of this small Vietnamese village for minor ailments.

At the end of December, JENNINGS COUNTY was relocated in the upper Mekong River in the vicinity of An Song supporting operation Barrier Reef, supporting River Division 531.

The first month of 1969 turned out to be extremely busy with the turnover of River Divisions, VIP visits, increased combat support and RAV preparations.

The JENNINGS COUNTY celebrated New Years Day with a visit from VADM EUMWALT, USN, COMNAVFORV.

On 3 January RADM HOUSE, USN, First Records, visited the ship in the helicopter that made the 3000th accident free landing since being recommissioned in June of 1966.

RADM HOUSE, USN again visited JENNINGS COUNTY on 13 January.

On 8 January two more Admirals visited JENNINGS COUNTY. VADM STEELE, COMNAVFORKOREA and RADM ROSENBERG, COMPHIBGRU THREE visited and toured the ship.

River Division 531 was relieved by River Division 554 after a long and eventful tour in Vietnam. An awards ceremony was held aboard JENNINGS COUNTY for River Division 531 on 17 January, two days before their departure. Rach Gia, District Chief, presented the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry to 5 members of RIVDIV 531 and one member of CTF 116 Staff.

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On 23 January JENNINGS COUNTY embarked Seal Team ALPHA, 4th Platoon and Mobile Support Team TWO ALPHA.

The officers and crew of JENNINGS COUNTY were allowed a little break in the action on 26 January when Gypsy Rose Lee came aboard on a USO sponsored tour. Her warm personality and good humor gave a welcome break to all hands and her visit was greatly appreciated.

February was highlighted by visits from JDM WELAND, USN, VADM BRINGLE, USN, VADM EUNWANT, USN and RADM COLE, USN. Commodore PEREZ, COMNAVSUPCEN ONE visited the ship with part of his staff on 8 February.

On 4 February LT DULIN and three civilian engineers from SFP Subic Bay, Philippines came aboard to perform a check on all shipalts to be accomplished during the March RAV in Subic. All hands have been busily preparing for that much needed RAV and their visit was welcome in that it answered many of our questions. Supply Department was especially busy submitting requisitions for material to be picked up in Subic during the up coming RAV.

March was highlighted by GARRETT COUNTY relieving us on station on the 3rd and our trip to Subic Bay, Philippines for RAV. The relief was accomplished smoothly and swiftly with all ammo, PER handling equipment, and personnel transferred to the GARRETT.

The ship arrived in Subic on 8 March and immediately commenced offloading gear for repair work. The RAV was successful and much was accomplished. All crypto gear was repaired and several pieces of radio equipment were overhauled. The major job for Deck Department was replacement of the 5000 pound bow anchor lost in December. The replacement anchor was received in Subic and one shot of anchor chain was replaced when tests showed the required tolerance was exceeded. This was accomplished by 21 March. Work was also accomplished on the motor generators, boat davits and strongback. Calibration of fire control gunsights for the 40MM guns was completed. One shipalt was accomplished for Deck Department: the addition of ammunition boxes for 2.75 inch rockets and 81MM mortars. Major work was also accomplished in engineering. All five ship's service diesel generators were replaced. The Fairbanks-Morse AC units were replaced by GM 3-288A units necessitating substantial modification to existing piping. Both vapor compressors were overhauled and a new water purification unit was installed.

On 27 March JENNINGS COUNTY departed Subic for a rest and relaxation visit to Hong Kong.

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At last, R&R in Hong Kong! On 30 March the ship arrived in Hong Kong for 6 days well deserved rest. All hands thoroughly enjoyed their liberty and returned to the Delta with many fine memories of JENNINGS COUNTY's visit to beautiful Hong Kong.

JENNINGS COUNTY returned to the Bassac River, Republic of Vietnam on 11 April and embarked River Division 515.

April was marked by JENNINGS COUNTY firing many gunfire support missions along the Bassac River. Several successful combined operations with FBR's and helicopters were carried out. JENNINGS COUNTY was credited during this month with destroying several enemy sampans, VC structures and causing secondary explosions and fires.

Gunfire support continued to be of major importance in May with the ship place E&I fire in several suspected VC positions. The ships landing corpsmen continued conducting MEDCAPS at various hamlets in the area.

Captain WEBB, USN, COMUSMACV came aboard 10 May for a PRR/EOD operation and on 31 May Captain FAULK, USN, prospective CTF 116, came on board for a visit.

In May supply support for the FBR Division improved considerably due to the receipt of a number of critically needed parts. These parts were of an engineering nature and critical to JENNINGS COUNTY's continued top-notch support of the FBR's.

On 9 June the ship changed stations again, this time to the upper Bassac River and later to the vicinity of Tan Chau on the Mekong River.

The officers and crew of the JENNINGS COUNTY were rewarded for their efforts in 1968 when Captain FAULK, USN, CTF 116 came aboard on 10 June to award the Navy Unit Commendation Medal to the ship. In addition, Captain FAULK awarded medals and commendations to RIVDIV 515 personnel.

JENNINGS COUNTY was honored on 20 June by the Visit of RADM D. V. GALLORY, USN RET. Admiral GALLORY has written many books about Navy Life, and he came aboard to obtain material for his new book.

June 20 also brought a first in FBR handling to the JENNINGS COUNTY. Six FBR's were airlifted by Army Skycrane into a remote area by helicopter.

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The ship logged its 3500th accident free landing on 18 July, and on 21 July the six FBR's were airlifted back to the ship by helicopter.

Captain R. B. FERRIS, USN, COMLANTASFLT OFF, inspected the ship in conjunction with the administrative inspection on 24 July.

On 26 July River Division 572 was embarked via barge from YRBM 20. The ship got underway on 27 July to My Tho, arriving July 28th and disembarked River Division 572.

July 29th found the ship underway for its new station on the Cho Chien River. The ship arrived on station and received LCDR James R. McCALL, USN, Commanding Officer, USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786), for an official visit. The next day the ship came alongside GARRETT COUNTY to embark River Division 535 and HA(L) 3 DET 6. This was a larger River Division, so some problems were encountered but handled without any difficulty.

August was a breather for gunnery personnel, due to being called upon less for gunfire support; however, with a larger River Division and a helo det aboard, the FBR maintenance personnel and Supply personnel found themselves with plenty to do.

On 8 September LCDR J. F. WENSE, USN, relieved LCDR A. VAN HORNE, USN as Commanding Officer, USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST 846).

GARRETT COUNTY relieved JENNINGS COUNTY on 10 September and we were underway for Hong Kong and Subic Bay, Philippines, for much needed rest and RAV. The ship arrived in Hong Kong on 16 September and stayed for six days. JENNINGS COUNTY reluctantly left Hong Kong on 22 September for Subic Bay to prepare for the next tour in Vietnam. JENNINGS COUNTY arrived in Subic Bay, P.I. on 26 September and immediately started the fast and furious pace of an RAV. Much work was accomplished in Subic in a very short time. CASREPTED radio transceivers were repaired, new receivers were installed and general maintenance of all electronics equipment was accomplished.

Engineering again was a major section of the RAV with partial, in place overhaul of three DC prime movers, auxiliary boiler overhaul, and renewal of all firemain piping in the main and auxiliary engine rooms. In addition 18 DC motors were rewound and 30% of the firemain loop was renewed.

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The anchor chain was again sandblasted and tested and four unserviceable shots were replaced. The anchor windlass was also overhauled and repaired. The topping lift and hook winch wires on the ten ton cargo boom were replaced and tested, and all cargo boom blocks inspected. The bow ramp on LCVF-2 was removed, straightened, and a new watertight gasket installed. The starboard valin device was overhauled and the starboard air flight deck safety net straightened. The ships boat booms and goose-neck assemblies were fluoroscoped and repaired where cracks in the old welding had developed.

The ship store was redone and \$13,000 of ship's store stock was provided.

On 12 October the ship departed Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines enroute to Ha Tien, Republic of Vietnam.

The ship arrived on station at Ha Tien, Republic of Vietnam on 16 October and came alongside USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST 838) for turnover. HA(1) 3 DWT 3 was embarked and the ship assumed support responsibility of RIVDIV 532. Upon completion, Captain E. E. ELLIS, USN, COMNAVSUPFLOT ONE, arrived on board for an unofficial visit.

On 23 October the ship got underway for An Thoi, Republic of Vietnam for replenishment and anchored at An Thoi that same night. Boat replenishment from USS MARS (AFS 1) was accomplished and the ship returned to station at Ha Tien. The replenishment system at An Thoi, where we meet the replenishment ships, turned out to be excellent and was continued the remainder of the time while in the Gulf of Thailand. These replenishments were scheduled every 15 to 18 days. This method, whether by BOATREP, IUREP, or VERTREP has worked satisfactory and support by SBRVPAC has been outstanding.

November was a routine month for JENNINGS COUNTY. Normal support of River Division 532 at Ha Tien was conducted. It was soon discovered that both LCVF's and boat crews were to get a workout keeping supplies and ammunition available to the River Division at Ha Tien. Replenishments were conducted with USS MARK (AKL 12) on station, and a VERTREP was provided by USS MARS (AFS 1) at An Thoi.

Parts arrived in December which gave us a limited capability for maintenance and repair of Junks and FCP's.

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On Christmas Day JENNINGS COUNTY received an intelligence report of possible enemy mortar attack on Ha Tien so a night steering position was assumed within ships weapons range of a suspected staging area. A daybreak NGFS mission was conducted on 26 December. Although Christmas was not all peaceful and quiet for the officers and crew, it was found at least to be exciting.

On 28 December JENNINGS COUNTY logged its 4000th accident free helicopter landing.

At the request of N110, Ha Tien the ship conducted a NGFS mission on 29 December.

The first month of 1970 found JENNINGS COUNTY "anchored as before" in the Gulf of Thailand.

Replenishments were held with USS MARK (AKL 12) on 2 January and 20 January, USS NIAGRA FALLS (AFS 3) on 29 January, Tanker ISLANDER on 27 January and Tanker SHIN SUI MARU on 3 January.

Preparations were commenced for THE 1970 by receiving an increased quantity of stores and ammunition for contingency operations ashore. We were replenished with ammunition by USS MARK and USS MONMOUTH COUNTY (LST 1032).

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