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HCU-1/JVK/dn

5750

Ser: 369

29 May 1968

From: Commanding Officer, Harbor Clearance Unit ONE

To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09B9)

Subj: Command History
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

Encl: (1) Harbor Clearance Unit ONE Command History for Calendar Year 1967 (OPNAV Report 5750-1)

1. Harbor Clearance Unit ONE Command History for Calendar Year 1967 is forwarded as enclosure (1) in compliance with reference (a).

B.P. WINANT, III

Copy to:

CINCPACFLT
COMSERVPAC
COMSERVGRU THREE
SUPSALV (Code OOC)
Experimental Diving Unit, WASH DC
Deep Sea Diving School, WASH DC

I. BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS IN 1967

Date Event

2 JAN Harbor Clearance Unit ONE temporarily terminated clearance operations in the DaNang River and proceeded to Chu Lai, RVN to assist in the salvage of the USS MAHNOMEN COUNTY.

9 JAN A detachment from HCT THREE arrived on the scene of the mined dredge JAMAICA BAY at Dong Tam, RVN to commence salvage operations. As a consequence of the magnitude and importance of this salvage operation, the entire command was deployed to Dong Tam in the days that followed.

14 JAN A detachment from HCT FOUR left the JAMAICA BAY salvage operations to salvage MSB-14 which was sunk in the Long Tau River.
4 FEB Clearance operations were started on a fallen steel bridge that was partially blocking the entrance to Dong Tam basin.

Mid-MAR The DaNang River clearance operation resumed.

13 APR A detachment from HCT THREE arrived in Nha Trang, RVN to assist in the salvage of the M/V AMSTRA.

19 APR A detachment from HCT THREE commenced helicopter salvage operations in Cam Ranh Bay, RVN.

23 APR Salvage operations were initiated by HCT THREE personnel on the sunken gravel barge LC-63.

14 MAY Salvage operations were undertaken to recover an aircraft sunk off An Thoi, RVN.

16 MAY The SS MINOT VICTORY grounded and two experienced HCU ONE salvors were sent to the scene to provide technical assistance.

19 MAY The two YHLCs arrived in Subic Bay.

15 JUN Assistance was provided on the salvage operation of the grounded ship SS COSMOS TRADER.

24 JUN Personnel from HCT FIVE proceeded to the scene of the sunken Fast Patrol Craft- 97 to commence salvage operations.

8 JUL Training for HCT TWO started off the coast of Santa Barbara, California on the Advanced Diving System IV.

11 JUL Demolition operations commence in Subic Bay on the sunken cruiser USS ROCHESTER.

28 JUL The YLLC-4 crew assumed custody at their newly converted craft in Sasebo, Japan.

12 AUG A helicopter was recovered by a detachment from HCT ONE.

15 AUG A helicopter was recovered at Tra Cu, RVN by a detachment from HCT ONE.
2 SEP A detachment from HCT FOUR arrived at the Vietnamese Navy LSM-405, which was grounded.

11 SEP HCT TWO was dispatched to Wake Island to conduct clearance operations on the broken hull of the grounded SS R.O. STONER.

16 SEP HCT FIVE departed Subic Bay for Nha Trang, RVN to conduct emergency repairs to underwater POL lines.

2 OCT HCT TWO commenced clearing a sunken pontoon in the inner basin of Subic Bay.

11 OCT A wreck in the Co Chien River was lowered by explosives demolition.

11 OCT A detachment from HCT THREE commenced salvaging a sunken gravel barge.

14 OCT A detachment from HCT FOUR recovered a helicopter in the Dong Tranh River.

26 OCT The Advanced Diving System IV got its first operational assignment in Subic Bay, on an air craft salvage operation.

6 NOV A detachment from HCT FIVE salvaged a USAID forklift in New Port, RVN.

10 NOV A detachment of divers embarked in a Coast Guard buoy tender for a two week Buoy and NavAid inspection cruise.

15 NOV Demolition operations began on the sunken prison ship SS SEIAN MARU in Subic Bay.

17 NOV A LCU ramp was cleared in the Soi Ran River, RVN.

21 NOV HCT FIVE went to the scene of the grounded LST USS CLARK COUNTY, to assist in salvage operations.

24 NOV An Army helicopter gunship that had sunk in Nha Be was salvaged.

24 NOV Repair and salvage operations began on mined craft YRBM-16.

3 DEC A sunken ammunition barge hazard to navigation was cleared at Cat Lai, RVN, using demolition.
Emergency repair and salvage assistance was performed on the mined merchantman SS SEATRAIN TEXAS.

II. BASIC NARRATIVE

A. COMMAND ORGANIZATION AND RELATIONS

1. The Commanding Officer of Harbor Clearance Unit ONE is Commander B.P. WINANT, III, 364578/6000, USN who relieved Lieutenant Commander H.E. BOLSTER, 534661/1100, USN in ceremonies at the U.S. Naval Station Theater, Subic Bay on 12 October 1967.

2. The primary mission of HCU ONE is to provide a Western Pacific harbor and river clearance and salvage capability. However, because of the present war in Vietnam, the primary requirement for this capability is in the Republic of Vietnam. In addition, HCU ONE provides a salvage force in-being which can be utilized to augment Seventh Fleet salvage forces when that commander requires assistance.

3. The home port of HCU ONE is U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. However, the command is considered an afloat command and is on constant standby to deploy and conduct salvage or clearance operations anywhere in the Western Pacific if the need arises. During the past year there have been detachments of the command deployed to Vietnam at all times. HCU ONE is assigned a mooring in Vung Tau Harbor, RVN which serves as the homeport of units deployed to Vietnam.

4. Harbor Clearance Unit ONE is under the direct operational control of Commander Service Force, Pacific Fleet, although individual deployed detachments of the command ordinarily report to an assigned military/area commander for operational control. Detachments deployed to Vietnam are under the operational command of Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam. Administrative control of HCU ONE is exercised by Commander Service Group THREE. The Commanding Officer HCU ONE retains administrative control of deployed detachments.

5. At the present time HCU ONE is comprised of 23 officers, 220 enlisted men, 55 of whom are divers, and numerous salvage craft and boats. There are five harbor clearance teams, each of which ordinarily has two officers and twenty men assigned. The officers and about one-half the enlisted men in the
team are qualified divers. Harbor clearance teams form the nucleus around which the command is organized. Except for the crews of the light lift craft, the remainder of the command personnel are assigned to the Administrative and Operations, Supply, Maintenance, and Medical departments. In addition to its military personnel, HCU ONE has indigenous workers employed who perform routine maintenance and preservation functions on the salvage craft.

6. As would be expected in such a command, many of HCU ONE's officers have had a great deal of salvage experience, this includes the Commanding and Executive officers. Moreover, the Maintenance Officer is a salvage engineer and the Medical Officer is a Diving Medical Officer.

7. The four light lift craft (YLLC-1, 2, 3 and 4) are converted LCUs and have a permanent crew of one officer and approximately sixteen enlisted men assigned. These craft have a small galley and berthing facilities on board. They have an "A" frame mounted on the bow which is used for making bow lifts. The "A" frames are rated at twenty or twenty-five tons, depending on the design of the individual craft. There are air compressors and pumps permanently installed in the craft and they carry equipment for laying two sets of beach gear. Though they are limited in speed and maneuverability, the YLLCs make excellent platforms for diving and salvage operations.

8. The four non-self-propelled medium lift craft (YMLC-5, 6, 7, and 8) are on lease from the British Government and are manned by harbor clearance teams as the occasion demands. These craft were previously designated HLC-1, 2, 3, and 4. YMLC's usually deploy in pairs. All four craft have berthing facilities and two of them, one for each pair, have galleys. One pair is normally deployed to Vietnam where it stands in readiness should it be needed on a salvage or clearance operation. It also provides living and stowage facilities for deployed harbor clearance teams. A pair of YMLCs have a combined maximum lift capacity of 1500 tons.

9. The two non-self-propelled heavy lift craft, YHLC-1 (CRILLEY) and YHLC-2 (CRANDALL) were purchased during the year from Germany and are currently undergoing overhaul and conversion to U.S. Navy specifications. However, they remain in a ready status should they be required on a salvage operation. They are relatively large craft, each one having a maximum lift capacity of 2400 tons. No crews are permanently assigned to these craft as they would be manned by harbor clearance teams should they be needed on a salvage or clearance operation.
10. In addition to several small boats, which will not be enumerated, the command has two sixty-four foot diving boats (YDB-1 and 2), each of which has a crew of four enlisted men. They are equipped with a radar, sea scanner, and radios. They are useful and effective diving boats.

11. The non-self-propelled Repair Salvage Tender YRST-1 serves as the command headquarters, providing hotel services to the staff departments and repair and maintenance support for the harbor clearance teams, boats and craft assigned. There is a crew of two officers and approximately thirty-five enlisted men assigned to this craft. The YRST-1 has messing and berthing facilities on board.

12. During the past year many of the craft in the command were redesignated to their present designations. Authority for these changes was promulgated by COMSERVPAC Notice 5030 of 30 August 1967. SECNAV Notice 5030 of 14 September 1967 promulgated the authority for naming the two heavy lift craft CRILLEY (YHLC-1) and CRANDALL (YHLC-2).

13. Harbor Clearance Unit ONE also has custody of the Navy's newest and most sophisticated operational deep diving system. It is the Advanced Diving System IV, which the Navy is leasing from its developer and builder, Ocean Systems, Incorporated of Santa Barbara, California. This diving system is currently certified and operational to 300 foot depths. It consists of a diving bell and two deck decompression chambers, with a pressurized entry lock. Deep diving on mixed gases can be conducted in the water from the diving bell while the decompression can be accomplished in one of the deck decompression chambers. It is expected that the depth limitation of this system will be increased in the near future, eventually to 600 feet. Authority to do so is pending the outcome of a decompression table development and testing program.

B. OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. During the past year HCU ONE has engaged in salvage and diving operations too numerous to discuss in detail. Many were small and repetitious, such as the many times a diver inspected the hull or screws of patrol boats in Vietnam. A lesser number were significant, each in some way unique, and worthy of note. Some were major salvage efforts. In addition to the individual operations listed below, HCU ONE detachments provided frequent diving and salvage support to Commander Task Force 117 (Mobile Riverine Force), which operates in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam.
2. As the year turned, Harbor Clearance Team ONE personnel found themselves engaged in a river clearance operation in DaNang, RVN, which had been going on for several weeks. However, before much could be accomplished in the new year they found that their services were more urgently required on a fleet salvage operation at Chu Lai, RVN. On the second of January they arrived on the scene of the USS MAHOMOMEN COUNTY (LST-912) salvage operation where they reported to the On-Scene-Commander, CTU 73.4.1, for duty under the direction of Commander J.B. OREM, USN, 543099/1400, the officer-in-charge of the salvage operation.

3. The MAHOMOMEN COUNTY was broached port side-to inside the surf zone. During the entire operation rough seas were the rule rather than the exception. This condition contributed to the difficulties encountered in laying beach gear, in helicoptering and high-lining equipment to the stranded vessel and in the removal of cargo. The ship was severely holed in the bottom and foam was used to help regain buoyancy, a relatively new technique in salvage operations.

4. As a consequence of the continuing rough seas the MAHOMOMEN COUNTY eventually broke up, the bow separating from the main section of the hull, and salvage operations were terminated a few days later, on 31 January, without successfully salvaging the ship. HCT ONE departed the scene on 30 January to return to Subic Bay for some much needed rest, having been in Vietnam for five continuous months.

5. Shortly after the MAHOMOMEN COUNTY went aground the dredge JAMAICA BAY, on contract to the U.S. Government, was mined and sank in twenty feet of water in the vicinity of Dong Tam, RVN. The mining occurred on 9 January. The salvage operation that was necessitated because of this casualty proved to be the biggest salvage operation of the year for HCU ONE, requiring deployment of the entire command.

A detachment from HCT THREE arrived on the scene the day of the mining and began surveying the damage. The dredge was about 144 feet long, with a beam of 42 feet, and displaced approximately 2200 tons. It had been blasted from both sides and was resting on the bottom with a thirty degree port list. The list was primarily caused by the starboard spud which was in the lowered position. The port spud was raised and locked in place.

6. On 11 January YLLC-2 and YMLC-6 arrived with the remainder of HCT THREE to aid in the salvage operation. The next day YMLC-5 arrived. These craft came from Vung Tau, RVN. Also on the 11th, the Commander Service
Force Pacific Salvage Officer, Commander E.B. MITCHELL, USN, 482634/1400, arrived on scene to assume officer-in-charge of salvage operations responsibility. It was important to salvage the dredge not only for its own value, but also because it was blocking an LST landing ramp in the Mekong River.

7. On 12 January the only missing body was recovered from inside the dredge. On the 13th, HCT FOUR arrived from Subic Bay, followed by HCT FIVE on the 17th. On the 26th, 28th, and 30th the YRST-1, YMLC-7, and YMLC-8, respectively, arrived from Subic Bay. Also, HCT TWO arrived as a riding crew on the two YMLCs. This completed the building of the salvage force, though additional equipment such as floating cranes and tugs available in Dong Tam were also utilized on the operation.

8. While the dredge was listing to port most of the patching was done on the starboard side. When this was essentially completed the starboard spud was removed, after several attempts, by controlled blasting and the dredge came into an upright position with only a slight port list. This exposed the port side of the dredge and patching operations continued.

9. On 5 February the first test lift was attempted, using the four medium lift craft, two on each side bow to bow. On 7 February, after several prior attempts, some of which were aborted when several of the three inch lift lines parted, the dredge was lifted, rotated 180 degrees, and moved in toward the beaching area. After this lift had been completed the YMLC-6 sank during the night when the tide rose higher than expected. Three days were required to refloat the lift craft, and it was placed back in service on 14 February.

10. Several more lifts were successfully accomplished and with the aid of multiple sets of beach gear the dredge was placed in shallow enough water that patching, demudding, and repairs could be expedited.

11. On the first of March the HCU ONE Executive Officer, LT B.L. DELANOY, 148680/6002, Assistant Officer-in-Charge of the operation, relieved Commander Mitchell as the Officer-in-Charge.

12. Among the many problems encountered on the operation were those of swift currents and zero diving visibility. At certain periods during the tidal cycle, diving operations had to be suspended because the currents were too strong to permit divers to work safely.
13. On 4 March the dredge floated at high tide, but it was several more days before it became completely buoyant. Foam was employed in dewatering some of the flooded compartments.

14. On 12 March the dredge was floating clear, towing patches had been installed, and it was ready for tow to a Saigon dry dock. Unfortunately, however, the calm tow from Dong Tam ended when the open seas were reached as the tow proceeded to the mouth of the Long Tau River for the transit to Saigon. Strong winds and heavy seas caused many of the patches to be torn loose and uncontrolled flooding began. Within a short time the dredge had sunk again, this time in 36 feet of water in open seas. Its position was on the tip of Banc Du Soi Rap Shoal, a few miles from Cap St. Jacques. The wreck sank on its port side.

15. In the meantime, the command made preparations to return to Subic Bay. A couple of days later YRST-1 began the tow back to Subic Bay.

16. Some salvage equipment that was on the dredge was eventually recovered, but the remainder and the wreck itself was considered uneconomically salvageable, particularly because of the exposure to open seas. A later attempt to right the wreck was unsuccessful.

17. On 14 January, during the JAMAICA BAY salvage operations, YLLC-2, with a detachment of HCT FOUR divers embarked, sailed for the sunken MSB-14 in the Long tau River, which had been rammed by a merchant ship. Upon their arrival, the divers located the boat, rigged and tested straps, and prepared them for passing to a floating crane. However, when the crane arrived it was determined that the boat would break in half if an attempt were made to lift it in one piece. Therefore it was moved in to shallow water where it was split in two sections, using a lifting strap, and the two sections were lifted and placed on the barge that was standing by for that purpose, thus completing the operation.

18. Also during the JAMAICA BAY salvage operation it was necessary to remove a fallen steel bridge which partially blocked the entrance to Dong Tam Basin. By utilizing a combination of crane lift and demolitions this job was accomplished during the period 4 February to 27 February, though it was not a daily operation.

19. In mid-March YLLC-3 and HCT FIVE were dispatched to DaNang, RVN to complete the DaNang River clearance operation that had been initiated in 1966, but had been postponed by the MAHNONEN COUNTY and JAMAICA
BAY salvage operations. The purpose of the operation was two-fold. First, there was an 150 foot ship sunk in the DaNang River which was to be removed for navigational reasons. Second, it was desired to use this hulk to build a breakwater to the north of the DaNang deep water piers. Before the operation had been terminated at the end of December 1966, the wreck had been blasted into 75 ton sections, each of which could be picked up and loaded onto a barge by a large floating crane.

20. On 16 April the project was 95 percent complete and was turned over by HCT FIVE to the Naval Support Activity DaNang divers for final completion. At that time HCT FIVE and YLLC-3 were detached from the job.

21. In Nha Trang, RVN on 11 April the Shell Oil Company tanker M/V AMSTRA, which was flying the British flag, suffered an external explosion which caused a four foot by six foot hole below the water line aft, resulting in flooding of the engine room. Two days later HCT THREE was dispatched to the scene from Vung Tau, to render salvage assistance to the stricken ship. Seventh Fleet salvage ships arrived on the scene and formed Task Unit 73.4.1 and Commander Service Group THREE Salvage Officer, Commander J.B. OREM, assumed officer-in-charge responsibilities for the operation. A temporary patch was constructed, the ship dewatered, and most of the cargo off-loaded. This caused the hole to become clear of the water and a towing patch was constructed and welded into place. The job was completed on 23 April when the AMSTRA was ready to be rigged for towing.

22. On 19 April HCT THREE detached from AMSTRA salvage operations and on 20 April commenced helicopter salvage operations in Cam Ranh Bay. Team divers recovered bodies and personal affects and weapons. Most of the helicopter wreckage was also recovered and operations were terminated on the same day.

23. The U.S. Army barge LC-63, loaded with gravel, sunk at a gravel loading pier in Vung Tau, RVN in fifteen feet of water. The Army off loaded the gravel with a clamshell. HCT THREE then moved the barge by parbuckling it three times, using beach gear laid from the YLLC-1. The barge was then abandoned clear of the pier and local shipping. The operation which commenced on 23 April and was completed on 6 May.

24. HCT THREE conducted an aircraft recovery operation off An Thoi, RVN on 14 and 15 May, in which 85 percent of the aircraft wreckage was recovered.
25. The SS MINOT VICTORY grounded on 16 May in the vicinity of North Reef, some 250 miles northeast of DaNang, RVN. Though the salvage operation was conducted by Seventh Fleet forces (CTU 73.4.1), HCU ONE dispatched WO-1 BOSN D.E. GABLE, 696716/7132, USN and DCC(DV) J.N. MAXWELL, 901 24 75, USN to the scene to provide technical assistance. The ship was retracted from the reef on 23 May.

26. Perhaps the greatest acquisition of the year for HCU ONE occurred on 18 and 19 May when the YHLCs arrived in Subic Bay upon completion of an ocean tow from Bremerhaven, West Germany. The YHLCs, ex-German lift craft AUSDAUER and ENERGIE, were purchased by the Navy to supplement its salvage assets. They are the same two lift craft which participated in salvage operations in the Suez Canal in 1957. In ceremonies conducted by Rear Admiral N.C. WARD, Commander Service Group THREE, on 15 October, the two craft were renamed the CRILLEY (YHLC-1) and the CRANDALL (YHLC-2), in honor of two distinguished Navy salvors who had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism during deep submarine salvage operations.

27. Both craft have the capability for making bow, stern, and side lifts. CRILLEY and CRANDALL have an overall length of 249 feet, a maximum beam of 40'8", and a mean draft of 11 feet at a light displacement of 2450 tons.

28. Training commenced on the YHLCs on 22 May, shortly after their arrival in Subic Bay, with German instructors. This phase of training was completed on 14 June when a nucleus of HCU ONE personnel had become sufficiently proficient to train the remainder of the harbor clearance teams. At that time the German instructors departed for their homes in Germany.

29. After this, training continued intermittently for several weeks until all the harbor clearance teams had been trained in the use of the craft. They then went into a standby status ready for immediate deployment to any salvage operation in the Western Pacific that might require their services. Also, at the end of the year a modernization and conversion program for both craft was begun at the Ship Repair Facility, Subic Bay.

30. In still another grounding the SS COSMOS TRADER grounded in Coconut Bay, Vung Tau, RVN on 15 June. HCT FIVE and YLLC-1 proceeded to the scene and commenced salvage operations. Cargo off loading began and beach gear was laid from the YLLC-1 and YMLC-7, which was brought to the scene. Upon arrival of Seventh Fleet salvage forces HCU ONE forces on the
scene reported to the Seventh Fleet On-Scene-Commander, CTU 73.4.1. The officer-in-charge of the salvage operation was LCDR J.J. GOODWIN, USN, 579528/1400 of Commander Service Group THREE's staff. (Earlier in the year LCDR GOODWIN served as the HCU ONE Maintenance Officer and Salvage Engineer.) On 21 June, after beach gear was rigged and most of the cargo and fuel oil off loaded, the ship was pulled free, but not before several prior attempts failed. The Seventh Fleet ships departed on 23 June and HCU ONE assumed the responsibility for clearing the screw of the COSMOS TRADER of a fouled tow wire. This was completed about 25 June and the operation was terminated.

31. The Fast Patrol Craft-97 (Swift Boat) sank on 24 June as a result of hostile fire, in 27 feet of water near the mouth of the Ganh Hao River, 130 miles southwest of Saigon. Initial salvage operations were conducted by HCT FIVE, using YLLC-1 and a commercial tug. After several attempts to lift the craft with YLLC-1 were unsuccessful, due to limited twenty ton lifting capacity of the lift craft and the heavy seas, the USS OAK HILL (LSD-7) was used to pick up the boat with its thirty-five ton boom. It was dewatered and placed inside the OAK HILL for transportation to a repair facility. The operation was completed on 2 July.

32. As a partial consequence of the large number of experienced deep sea divers assigned to the command, HCU ONE has become directly involved in the field of deep diving by its acquisition of the Advanced Diving System IV.

33. The first formal training involved ten HCU ONE divers and was conducted off the coast of Santa Barbara, California, between 8 and 19 July, on the USS CHOWANOC (ATF-100). This was shortly after the Naval Ship Systems Command had given final certification to the system and it had been leased to the Navy by its developer and builder, Ocean Systems, Incorporated. In addition, the divers undergoing training had just completed a course in the mixing of diving gases at the U.S. Navy Underwater Swimmers School in Key West, Florida. As U.S. Navy decompression tables for deeper depths were still in the development stage the maximum approved depth was 200 feet for those initial training dives. Deeper dives had been made the previous year when the system still was being operated by Ocean Systems, Incorporated, but the decompression schedules were not Navy tables.

34. At the completion of this training period the system was flown to Hawaii on two C-130 aircraft and operated on 24 and 25 July from the USS GRAPPLER (ARS-7), with COMSERVPAC, COMSUBPAC, and other dignitaries as observers. This demonstrated that the system was a practical fly-away
35. Two more training periods were conducted in September and October, after the arrival of the ADS IV in Subic Bay. All told, thirty-nine Navy divers were qualified in the system during the year. As will be mentioned later, one salvage operation was also conducted using ADS IV.

36. During the period 11 through 20 July HCT FOUR conducted demolition operations on the sunken cruiser USS ROCHESTER in Subic Bay. By detonating a series of explosive charges the wreck was lowered from a minimum depth of 50 feet to a minimum depth of 65 feet, enabling deep draft tankers to approach and moor to the POL buoy planned for Subic Bay.

37. On 18 July HCT FIVE, using the YLLC-1 and LCM-8, salvaged sunken boats, pumps, and sections of a sunken pier at Nha Be, RVN. This operation was successfully completed on 22 July.

38. The command started the year with three YLLCs, but YLLC-4 became part of HCU ONE on 28 July in Sasebo, Japan, when its crew assumed custody of the newly converted craft. After appropriate dock and sea trials the craft was shipped to Subic Bay where it arrived on 17 August to become part of HCU ONE salvage craft fleet.

39. On 12 August a detachment from HCT ONE proceeded to coordinates XT 105225 in Vietnam, where an Army helicopter had crashed. The wreckage was located, three of the five missing bodies were recovered, and the wreckage was salvaged. The first attempted lift of the wreckage with a sky crane helicopter was unsuccessful and the final successful lift was made with a floating crane. The wreckage was placed in an LCM-8 upon termination of the operation on 15 August.

40. On 15 August a HCT ONE detachment rigged straps in a downed helicopter at Tra Cu, RVN that had been located by Army personnel. An Army skycrane helicopter made a successful lift and the operation was terminated.

41. The Vietnamese Navy LSM-405 grounded in the vicinity of Phan Thiet, RVN on 31 August. A Coast Guard WPB arrived on the scene a short time later and commenced pulling to retract the ship. The attempt was unsuccessful. A detachment from HCT FOUR arrived on 2 September to render assistance. On 3 September the USS RECLAIMER (ARS-42) arrived
on the scene and a short time later retracted the LSM-405 from the beach. Temporary emergency repairs were made to the ship and it proceeded on its own power to a repair facility.

42. On 5 September HCT FOUR started a salvage operation in My Tho on a sunken barge, with the YLLC-2 being used as a working platform. The cargo of gravel was partially off loaded using an air lift, but after patching the bow and stern voids air tests showed that the barge could not be made tight enough to dewater with air. Because of this and other pressing operations requiring immediate attention the operation was terminated on 15 September.

43. The tanker SS R.C. STONER grounded on Wake Island in early September. Initial salvage operations were undertaken by Seventh Fleet salvage forces. However, as a result of heavy surf the ship broke in two sections on 8 September and the operation became one of wreck disposal rather than one of salvage. HCT TWO was dispatched to Wake Island on 11 September to aid in the disposal of the wreck, and ultimately was assigned full responsibility for this phase of the operation. The operation was completed using demolitions and the team returned to Subic Bay on 20 October, when it was determined that the wreck had been lowered sufficiently that it would not interfere with aircraft operations at the nearby airport.

44. While on Wake Island HCT TWO also assisted in the emergency restoration of vital facilities that were damaged when typhoon Sarah crossed Wake Island on 16 September.

45. HCT FIVE departed from NAS Cubi Point on 16 September to perform emergency repairs on an underwater POL line a Nha Trang. The USS BOLSTER (ARS-38) was assigned as the diving platform. Before the operation was terminated in mid-November repairs had been made on POL lines at DaNang, Cau Viet, and Chu Lai. Part of the team was detached for other duties on 2 November as the BOLSTER had divers on board who were available to assist in the operation.

46. On 2 October HCT TWO commenced a clearing project in the inner basin of Subic Bay. A three foot by thirty foot pontoon causeway had sunk during a storm twenty years earlier at what was to become the mooring for a new SRF drydock, AFDM-6. The 50 ton causeway was first blasted into two twenty-five ton sections, which were lifted by YLLC-3, and a 100 ton floating crane provided by SRF Subic Bay. The pieces of wreckage were handily disposed of at a new breakwater being constructed by the Public Works Center Subic. The operation was completed on 6 October.
47. After two unsuccessful attempts by HCT FOUR detachments to locate a reported sunken wreck at the mouth of the Co Chien River, RVN, a Coast Guard patrol boat located and buoyed off the wreck when it became visible during and extremely low tide. HCT FOUR was then recalled to the scene and on 11 and 12 October demolished the 70 foot wreck with explosives to eliminate it as a navigational hazard. The mast, rudder post, and all topside projections were removed in this operation.

48. While alongside the Vung Tau gravel loading pier at the Delong pier the Army gravel barge LC-83 was overloaded and sunk. The gravel was subsequently off loaded by the Army, using a clam shell. On 11 October HCT THREE attempted to lift the barge with YLLC-4, but its lifting capacity was not sufficient to do the job. YMLC-8 was then rigged for a bow lift and subsequently made a successful lift of the barge. The barge was dewatered and turned over to the Army and the operations terminated on 14 October.

49. On 14 October a detachment from HCT FOUR sailed on board YLLC-4 to the Dong Tranh River where they recovered a downed helo which crashed and sank in twenty feet of water. The lift was made with the YLLC. The recovered helo was delivered to Army representatives in Vung Tau.

50. The ADS IV got its first operational use when it was used to salvage the wreckage of an A3B aircraft which crashed in Subic Bay between Grande Island and NAS Cubi Point on 21 October. The wreckage was found on 23 October in 144 feet of water by Ship Repair Facility divers, using a sea scanner for initial contact.

51. After appropriate arrangements had been made the ADS IV was loaded on the USS SAFEGUARD (ARS-25), along with HCT TWO and the HCU ONE Medical Officer. The diving operation commenced on 26 October and was completed on 30 October, after nearly all significant pieces of the wreckage were recovered. A YSD floating crane provide by SRF Subic was utilized for picking up the salvaged pieces.

52. A USAID forklift was dropped in the Saigon River by a crane at New Port, RVN. This was recovered by a HCT FIVE detachment which sailed to the scene on YDB-1 on 5 November. The forklift was located and lifting straps were rigged. The forklift was recovered with a crane the next day.

53. During the period 10 to 25 November a detachment from HCT THREE embarked on the USCG Buoy Tender BASSWOOD for buoy inspection and
repair operations along the coast of RVN. Numerous buoys and navigational aids were inspected and repaired.

54. On 15 November HCT FOUR commenced another demolition operation in Subic Bay, this time on the sunken Japanese prison ship SS SEIAN MARU. Again the purpose was to lower the wreck using demolition to provide a fifty-five foot clearance at mean extreme low water, thus enabling super tankers to make a safe approach to the new POL buoy that had been installed in the bay. The operation was conducted from the YLLC-1 and was completed on 28 November. Approximately 3800 pounds of explosives were used on this operation.

55. In another operation, which started on 17 November, a detachment from HCT THREE used YLLC-2 for a diving platform in removing the remains of a concrete pier that was obstructing an Army LCU landing area at the site of an old French fort on the Soi Rap River. Explosives were used to break the obstruction into small pieces, which were then moved across the river and out of the way by YLLC-2. This operation was completed on 18 November.

56. The USS CLARK COUNTY (LST-601) broached at Duc Pho, RVN on 16 November. On 21 November HCT FIVE left Vung Tau, RVN to assist Seventh Fleet salvage forces already on the scene. The ship was holed in several compartments and considerable patching, dewatering, and repairs were necessary before the ship could be safely retracted from the beach. The job was significant in that foam was successfully employed to provide buoyancy to holed and flooded compartments.

57. The CLARK COUNTY was retracted from the beach, using beach gear, on 1 December, after which the emphasis shifted to clean-up, patching, and repair. HCT FIVE departed the scene on 18 December when the ship was nearly ready for an ocean tow to a repair facility.

58. On 24 November YLLC-2, with a detachment from HCT FIVE, picked up a UH-1 helicopter gunship for the Army, which had been sunk at Nha Be. The wreckage had been located by two PBRs employing dragging techniques.

59. An external explosion severely damaged the YRBM-16 in the early morning hours of 24 November, while it was moored at Ben Tre, RVN. The YLLC-4 arrived a short time later with a detachment from HCT THREE embarked, to render casualty assistance. After it was determined that the stability of the craft was satisfactory, it was towed to Dong Tam where temporary repairs were to be accomplished.
60. At Dong Tam the craft was beached, stern first, and an ell shaped steel patch was constructed to cover the large hole in the starboard side of the craft. After it was installed and the craft dewatered the hull was patched with a semipermanent steel plate which was welded into place. In addition to the patching it was necessary to clean-up the craft, offload stores, and recover bodies. The Naval Support Activity, Detachment Dong Tam provided personnel and materials to assist Harbor Clearance Unit ONE forces assigned to this operation.

61. During the operation YLLC-4 was relieved by YLLC-2, which was later relieved by YLLC-3. In addition, HCT ONE relieved HCT THREE detachment originally assigned to the operation. All Harbor Clearance Unit ONE assets were detached on 21 December, leaving the YRBM-16 crew to finish the final welding and preparation for ocean tow. Shortly thereafter the craft was successfully towed in the open sea to a repair facility in Japan.

62. A Luzon Stevedoring Company barge sank due to overloading with ammunition at Cat Lai, RVN. On 3 December, after the ammunition had been removed, HCT THREE cleared the barge to a depth of 31 feet of water, using demolition, eliminating it as a navigational hazard.

63. On 22 December YDB-2, with HCU ONE Commanding Officer (who was making an inspection visit to HCU ONE assets in Vietnam) and a detachment from HCT ONE embarked, sailed from Vung Tau to Nha Be to render salvage assistance to SS SEATRAIN TEXAS. The SEATRAIN TEXAS had been seriously damaged from an external explosion. Assistance rendered consisted of dewatering by pumping, plugging holes in the hull, and shoring damaged bulkheads, after which the ship was considered safe for river transit to a repair facility. This operation completed the last significant salvage operation of 1967.

64. The end of the year found the crew of YLLC-5 in Sasebo, Japan, waiting to conduct dock and sea trials on their newly converted craft.

III SPECIAL TOPICS:

A. PERSONNEL CASUALTIES

1. Unfortunately, the many successful operations conducted during the year notwithstanding, HCU ONE incurred several personnel casualties.
2. On 18 January during the MAHNOMEN COUNTY salvage operations, AO1(DV) C.G. GORDON, USN, 418 22 51, was overcome with the extremely toxic fumes that were being released during salvage foaming operations when a compressor momentarily failed. He had been breathing air from the compressor through a face mask while directly engaged in foaming operations. DC1(DV) R.V. WELLS, USN, 349 78 85, went to GORDON's aid, but he was also overcome by toxic fumes. A third man MM2(DV) J. E. NESTOR, III, USN, 688 95 59, courageously rescued both men. GORDON recovered with no lasting ill effects, but four days later, on 22 January, WELLS died of complications arising from the fumes he had inhaled. His death was a great loss to HCU ONE as he was an outstanding petty officer and salvor.

3. On 13 August HCU ONE lost another fine sailor when Seaman G.S. CURTIS, USN, 138 84 94, drowned in Vung Tau Harbor, RVN. He was assigned to YLLC-2 which was at anchor at the time. It is believed that he accidently fell overboard.

4. The first killed-in-action casualty for HCU ONE occurred on 27 October in the vicinity of Tan An, RVN, when EM2(DV) J.T. NELSON, USN, 528 85 09, MMC(DV) L.J. TRUJILLO, USN, 489 81 69, and SFP2(DV) J.T. LINSCTT, USN, 685 47 16, were hit by hostile fire while searching for the body of a U.S. Army officer. Petty Officer NELSON's wounds were instantly fatal. Petty Officers TRUJILLO and LINSCTT although seriously wounded, survived and are recovering during prolonged hospitalization in the United States.

B. AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS

1. During the year numerous awards and commendations were received by personnel of Harbor Clearance Unit ONE. Many officers and men were awarded the Vietnam Campaign and Vietnam Service Medals. The following awards were received by the command or individuals within the command in addition to the foregoing.

Award Recipient

Navy and Marine Corps Medal MM2(DV) J.E. NESTOR, III, USN, 688 95 59

Bronze Star Medal LT B.L. DELANOY, USN, 148680/6002

Navy Commendation Medal with DCCM(DV) S.K. ADAMS, USN, 581 29 28

Combat "V"
EN2 J.L. ANDERSON, USN, 776 26 53
LT B.L. DELANOY, USN, 148680/6002
WO-1 D.E. GABLE, Jr., USN 696716/7132
LCDR J.J. GOODWIN, USN, 579528/1400
LT A. GREENE USNR, 671006/1105
LT O.A. KOHL, USN, 603928/6002
DCC(DV) J.N. MAXWELL, USN, 901 24 75
BM1(DV) J. RAMOS, Jr., USN, 547 87 57
LT R.R. WARREN, USN, 636378/6002

Navy Commendation Medal

WO-1 J.D. CAHILL, USN, 697327/7742
SK1 B.D. GLENN, USN, 474 85 48
LT J.C. NAQUIN, USN, 650313/6352

Navy Unit Commendation HARBOR CLEARANCE UNIT ONE

(All persons attached to HCU ONE during the period 24 February 1966 to 15 March 1967)

RVN Navy Distinguished Service LCDR H.E. BOLSTER, USN, 534661/1100 - Order Second Class

ROSTER OF HARBOR CLEARANCE UNIT ONE OFFICERS

31 DECEMBER 1967

BILLET OFFICER

Commanding Officer CDR Barent P. WINANT, III, 364578/6000

Executive Officer LT Orlin A. KOHL, USN, 603928/6002
Salvage Engineer and LT William I. MILWEE, Jr., USN, 630767/1400
Maintenance Officer
Medical Officer LT David A. YOUNGBLOOD, MC, USNR, 656236/2105
Administrative and LTJG Hampton M. DEJARNETTE, USNR, 688228/1105
Operations Officer
Supply Officer LT John D. MORRIS, III, SC, USN, 651393/3100
OINC HCT ONE LT John C. NAQUIN, USN, 650313/6352
AOINC HCT ONE SHIPREPTECH W-1 John D. CAHILL, USN, 697327/7742
OINC HCT TWO LTJG Richard D.L. JONES, USNR, 691668/1105
AOINC HCT TWO LTJG Roger J. MILLER, USNR, 696461/1105
OINC HCT THREE LTJG Daniel M. KENDALL, USNR, 696020/1105
AOINC HCT THREE BOSN W-1 Robert T. BELSHER, USN, 707151/7132
OINC HCT FOUR LT John V. KJELLMAN, USNR, 659953/1105
AOINC HCT FOUR BOSN W-1 Donnie E. GABLE, Jr., USN, 696716/7132
OINC HCT FIVE LT Edmond B. BENNETT, USN, 686021/6002
AOINC HCT FIVE BOSN W-1 Ocie O. WHITE, USN, 721629/7132
OINC YRST-1 LT Robert R. WARREN, USN, 636378/6002
AOINC YRST-1 CHMACH W-3 Gordon H. DAY, Jr., USN, 620169/7432
OINC YLLC-1 LTJG James H. BELANGER, USNR, 704663/1105
OINC YLLC-2 LTJG James C. ROGERS, USNR, 669474/1105
OINC YLLC-3 LTJG Frank W. GROESCH, USNR, 699350/1105
OINC YLLC-4 LT Richard H. GIEBNER, USNR, 666062/1105
ENLISTED PERSONNEL

ADAMS, S.K. 581 29 28 DCCM(DV)
AICHELE, WILLIAM F. 520 46 07 BM1(DV)
ALLEN, F.T., Jr. 660 80 64 BMC(DV)
AMI, ARSENIO C., Jr. 544 19 94 SD2
ANGLIN, F. 521 91 53 HM1(DV)
ANGOCO, VICENTE S. 465 01 50 GMG2
ANTHONY, R.I. 914 87 34 FN
AYALA, J. 362 55 15 BT1
BAGLIN, W.E. 776 06 08 EN3
BASILE, A.J., Jr. 788 64 18 SN
BEARDEN, STEPHEN L. B31 61 78 SN
BEST, M.A. 472 25 08 CS2
BECKHAM, H.C. 558 41 30 BMC(DV)
BETZLER, R.B. 779 80 17 SN
BISHOP, C.J. B71 05 77 SN
BORDER, R.C. B21 03 46 FA
BOYCE, W.M. 535 09 86 HM1(DV)
BOYER, R.L. 530 87 85 BM2
BRADY, J.T. 522 07 70 DC2(DV)
BRADY, R.C. 468 87 15 DC1(DV)
BRANCH, JERRY W. 821 25 96 SN
BRISH, S.P., Jr. 588 74 84 BT1
BROPHY, MICHAEL T. 915 47 85 GMG2
BROWN, N.A. 256 46 54 SM2
BROWNFIELD, CARL, Jr. 354 22 69 SFP3
BRYANT, H.T. 388 73 52 MR1(DV)
BULDA, B.S. 455 12 40 EN1
BUNTING, R.A. 545 49 57 BM2(DV)
BURGESS, GEORGE D. B11 48 06 ETN3
BURKHEAD, L.R. 999 28 15 FA(DV)
BYRD, R., Jr. 260 58 49 EN2
CABABARO, MANUEL A. 537 77 55 SD3
CACAYAN, LODIVICO S. 468 07 17 CS1
CALLOWAY, L.M., Jr. 585 76 65 BM2(DV)
CAMERINO, N.S. 455 10 10 PN1
CARLSON, D.S. 796 19 04 SN
CASHWELL, N.J. 914 57 34 MM3
CASTILLO, H.A.G. 206 24 71 RM1
CHIASSON, J.D. 778 09 88 BM3
CINGLE, JOHN K. 862 00 73 FN
CLARK, R.G. 920 42 07 SN(DV)
CLARKE, JAMES R. 688 86 97 GMGSN
COMPTON, J.T. 540 83 04 BM1(DV)
CONRAD, R.F. 548 05 98 RM2
COX, CHARLES A. 674 53 08 FA
CURTIS, J.K. 369 95 71 BM2
DASCH, G.C. 694 38 76 BT3
DAVIS, A.K. 478 91 05 SF1(DV)
DAVIS, J.W. 523 08 99 EM1
DEES, TOMMY D. 350 28 20 GMG2(DV)
DEESE, L.R. 478 66 27 CS2
DESONIA, PERFECTO D. 476 31 14 SK1
DOTY, D.R. B42 26 15 SA
DRAPER, J.B. 795 32 89 BM3
DRIGGS, LAVERN F. 388 21 81 BM3
DUARTE, JOSE R. 597 19 45 SN
EDWARDS, J.F. 530 87 06 QM1
FAULKNER, R.W. 491 33 92 GMG1(DV)
FAVORS, ALFREDO F. 535 69 92 BM1(DV)
FECIK, S. 139 17 33 SN
FIELD, B.A. 519 21 54 HM1(DV)
FRAME, D.G. 793 59 91 FN
FRUEH, T.H. 779 59 79 SN
GABRIEL, BALTAZAR C. 513 01 71 EM1
GARRETT, W.A. 137 86 12 PN3
GIAQUINTA, C.L. 355 02 11 SN
GIBSON, J.C. 390 70 06 ETN2
GILLIES, D.R. 538 63 58 BM1(DV)
GLENN, B.D. 474 85 48 SK1
GOINS, D.R. 515 02 64 MM1(DV)
GONZALEZ, O.R. 792 52 98 RM1
GORDON, C.G. 418 22 51 A01(DV)
GRAHAM, C.A. 683 28 70 SFM2
GRAMER, R.J. 789 75 93 SN
GROVES, C.R. 530 89 99 SMC
GYNN, PAUL T. 138 16 79 FN
HANSON, C.D., Jr. 428 54 68 MM1(DV)
HANSON, J.V. 696 39 74 FN
HARPER, G.C. 237 51 91 MM2
HARRELL, J.D.R. B81 61 65 FA
HATTER, HAROLD W. 515 40 76 MR2(DV)
HAUPTMAN, R.A. 302 26 11 BM2
HAWN, R.L. 691 18 36 SN
HAYNES, WILLIE .E. 697 58 59 FN
HENDRIX, K.R. 542 48 84 SN
HENRY, H.A. 298 38 54 CS1
HILL, C.W. 432 55 28 GMG1
HIMA, D.P. 525 68 46 EN1(DV)
HISSUNG, G. 369 66 22 GMG2(DV)
HOLM, G.E. 419 90 52 YNC
HOLM, R.D. 769 91 01 EN2
HORTON, C.R. 497 46 78 DC1
HOUSLEY, T.V. 776 02 99 BM3
HOWELL, W.G. 696 55 71 SN
HUTCHINSON, LORAN T. 684 33 67 SN
JACKSON, C. B31 61 06 SN
JACKSON, J.L. B41 32 84 SR
JACOBS, J. Jr. B19 04 19 SN
JOHNSON, B.C. 474 78 55 BT1
JONES, THOMAS C. B21 13 00 FN
JUDSON, W.E. 912 52 72 SM1
KEMP, JERRY W. 692 27 99 BM3(DV)
KERR, J.H. 281 42 06 BM1(DV)
KIDD, E.A.J.B. 489 54 80 SM2
KIENLE, J.C. B41 27 66 EMFN
KING, JEROME D. 788 74 11 EN3
KING, J.P. 661 73 92 SN
KING, M.D. 920 45 13 SFP3
LANDSTRA, E.A. 530 99 00 EN1(DV)
LACAZE, G.T., Jr. 528 68 58 CS1
LANG, TIMOTHY O. B41 69 33 FN
LANGDON, J.E. 389 57 81 DC1(DV)
LARIMORE, LARRY E. 588 86 45 SF1(DV)
LARSON, R.C. 445 41 40 SFC(DV)
LASH, LELAND E. 696 35 52 BM3(DV)
LASTER, JACKIE D. 349 33 56 SM1
LHEUREAU, JOSEPH W. 139 19 28 FN
LINAYAO, C.R. 583 40 51 CS1
LOUERMILK, W.H. 480 00 80 EN1(DV)
MACDONALD, R.J. 354 98 28 EM3
MADDOX, D.N. 693 53 30 EN3
MALOTT, K.L. 692 44 13 RM2
MARTORANO, V.A. 354 91 91 SN
MARUCHEAU, R.O. 709 65 59 CS1
MATTHEWS, R.W. 543 10 47 HM2(DV)
MAXWELL, J.N. 901 24 75 DCC(DV)
MCKEAN, D.P. B31 61 13 SN
MCKELVEY, J.R. 524 86 44 SN
MEAUX, EARL P. 683 66 18 QM2
MEEK, CHARLES M. 999 26 07 BM3
MEEKS, C. 357 33 54 CS1
MERON, R.T. 254 06 24 BM1
MEYERS, W.G. 913 79 11 SN
MICHAEL, P.R. 913 10 72 SK3
MILLER, D.L. 776 06 03 SN
MILLER, RAYMOND J. 254 55 39 ENC(DV)
MOORE, E.W. 676 72 64 FN
MORALES, R.F. B41 37 42 SN
MORIARTY, G.F. 436 14 81 SMC
MORRIS, J.R. 688 07 82 EN2(DV)
MORRIS, R.D. 589 21 54 MM2(DV)
MULLENDORF, G.W. B32 09 91 SN
NABONG, A.O. 476 21 24 EM2
NEGOS, E. 330 77 59 ENC
NELSON, J.B. 587 64 51 EM1(DV)
NEWMAN, NORMAN M. B10 87 36 SN
NIELSEN, C.J. 778 42 49 BM3
OKADA, JERRY I. B91 05 60 ENFN
OLSON, D.O. 306 93 16 CS1
OVARD, P.J. 795 41 83 MM3
PARR, L.J. B89 50 64 SN
PATTERSON, THEODORE 852 95 16 FA
PAYNE, J. 723 57 41 BMC
PENNINGTON, C. 290 18 83 BM2(DV)
PEREIRA, A.P. 712 46 16 BMC
PICRAY, F.J., III 794 82 13 EN3
PISA, C.C. B62 65 65 GMGSA
PITTMAN, K.M. B31 94 19 SA
POOLE, J.A. 253 52 62 HMC(DV)
POWIERZA, WALTER J. 821 64 15 EN1
QUINN, J.P. 463 84 65 SF1(DV)
QUINONEZ, G.T. 594 20 51 BM3
REGAN, J.R. 210 11 00 SM1
REGNER, J.J. 789 92 96 FN
REICHARDT, D.L. 585 66 44 BT2
REXFORD, R.E., Jr. 588 05 37 EN2
RIGGS, THOMAS D. B81 29 47 GMGSN
RODRIGUEZ, ESTEBAN C.467 99 62 EM2
ROWLETT, R.O. 916 90 96 SA
RUSSELL, C.T., Jr. 599 19 42 GMG2
SALMON, E., Jr. 335 52 03 BMC
SCHMIDT, ROBERT H. 591 09 34 CS1
SCHULTZ, D.O. 699 62 59 BT3
SCOTT, TERRY K. B88 01 00 GMG3
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VANVLEET, BARRY L. 451 90 04 BM1(DV)
VICENTE, BENEDICTO 513 19 25 SD2
VICTORIA, J.G. 467 98 71 PNC
VILLANUEVA, A.C. 467 94 60 EM1
VYCITAL, J.J. 513 85 48 EN2(DV)
WAGONER, JAMES R. 480 48 98 SK2
WALLEN, E.E. B80 17 32 DCFN
WALLIS, C.P. 728 10 65 BMC(DV)
WARD, H.C. 277 29 83 EN1(DV)
WARNER, L.H. 138 18 97 FN
WATSON, W.N. 775 97 55 SN(DV)
WEIS, R.K. 523 36 54 BM1(DV)
WESOLEK, DANIEL J. B41 73 31 FN
WESOLEK, DONALD J. B41 72 96 FN
WETZEL, C.D. 515 89 45 MM1(DV)
WHITEFIELD, J.H. 973 93 94 SF1(DV)
WHITENECK, D.O. B88 76 58 SN
WILSON, J.M. 902 83 64 HM1(DV)
WILSON, J.R. 674 53 09 FN
WILSON, R.R. 805 09 47 BM1
WOOL, RICHARD A. B31 80 57 SA
YEAMAN, RONALD L. 524 69 32 SM2(DV)
TRANSFERRED PERSONNEL:
LCDR H.E. BOLSTER, USN 534661/1100
LCDR J.J. GOODWIN, USN 579528/1400
LT B.L. DELANOY, USN 148680/6002
LT A. GREENE, USNR 671006/1105
ANDERSON, J.L. 776 26 53 EN2
LINSCOTT, J.T. 685 47 16 SFP2(DV)
NESTOR, J.E. 688 95 59 MM2(DV)
RAMOS, J., Jr. 547 87 57 BM1(DV)
TRUJILLO, L.J. 489 81 69 MMC(DV)

CASUALTIES:
DC1(DV) R.V. WELLS, USN 22 January 67 - MAHOMEN COUNTY Salvops
SN G.S. CURTIS, USN 13 August 67 - Drowned in Vung Tau Harbor
EM2(DV) J.T. NELSON, USN 27 October 67 - KIA Tan An, RVN

IV. DOCUMENTARY ANNEXES

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE Release 151-67
U.S. NAVAL BASE July 10, 1967
SUBIC BAY, PHILLIPPINES FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HCU-1 BLOWS UP U.S. NAVY CRUISER

Story by T.A. Leigh, Journalist, U.S. Navy

U.S. NAVAL BASE, SUBIC BAY, Phillipines (PAO) -- Subic Bay based Harbor Clearance Unit-1 Monday began blasting apart a World War I heavy cruiser named the Rochester that sits on the bottom of Subic Bay, in about 80 feet of water, just off the Alava pier.

The old cruiser, sunk during World War II by Japanese aircraft as it sat at the pier being converted into a barge, poses an obstacle to the installation of the new POL Fuel Mooring Buoy - a facility that will enable Subic Bay Naval base to handle huge 100,000-ton-plus supertankers, and must be cleared away before the Fuel project can continue.

According to HCU-1 Executive Officer Lieutenant B.L. Delanoy, a sophisticated demolitions problem is presented by the old hulk. The idea will be to smash the ship down so that the deep draft supertankers won't get hung up on a protruding mast or gun barrel. But cruisers are heavily armored and are built to resist damage that would be caused by explosives.

The answer lies in a split second arrangement of two explosions - one, using hose explosives, to first penetrate the armor and cut the ship apart; the other, a big central charge situated high on the ship, to then push the dismembered remains into the bay floor.

Lt. Delanoy speculates that as few as three charges could be enough to do the job, but arrangements have been made for six in case difficulties crop up or the armor is more impenetrable than expected.

An interesting sidelight to the demolitions operation is that it will be the first Harbor Clearance job of its type to be undertaken since the Second World War. The last one like it was carried out at Subic Bay toward the end of the war to clear the area of wrecks, and Lt. Delanoy, now Executive Officer of HCU-1 and recently awarded the Bronze Star, was an enlisted diver during that operation.

(B)

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE Release 157-67
U.S. NAVAL BASE July 22, 1967

SUBIC BAY, PHILLIPPINES FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DIVERS DESTROY WWI CRUISER AT SUBIC BAY Story by T.A. Leigh, Journalist, USN

U.S. NAVAL BASE, SUBIC BAY, Phillippines (PAO) -- Subic Bay base Harbor Clearance Unit One recently blasted apart a sunken World War I heavy cruiser named the USS ROCHESTER in the first stage of a construction project that will ultimately open Subic Bay Naval Base to the biggest fuel tankers afloat.

The old cruiser, sunk during World War II by Japanese aircraft as it sat at Subic's Alava Pier being converted into a barge, posed an obstacle to the installation of a new deep water off-shore fuel mooring buoy the U.S. Navy is building to handle the huge 100,000-ton-plus gross weight ocean supertankers now plowing the seas. It had to be removed before the Fuel project could be continued.

A sophisticated demolitions problem was presented by the old hulk. It sat, reconnoitering HCU-1 divers found, in 80 feet of water with its bow end angling up to approximately 45 feet, directly in the middle of the fuel buoy access channel. Since supertankers are very deep draft ships and need at least 55 feet of depth to maneuver, something had to be done about the Rochester to gain the 10 foot difference.

Lieutenant B.L. Delanoy, Harbor Clearance Unit One Executive Officer, and a salvage and diving professional with a long record of demolitions experience, came up with the answer: cut the extending bow portion of the wreck apart with specially arranged penetrating explosives, than push it down into the bay floor with a big central package charge.

The plan was good. There was only one problem -- cruisers are heavily armored and built to resist damage that might be caused by explosives. The Rochester, no different, had a five inch thick fifteen foot wide armor belt that had to be sheared before its bow could be smashed down out of the way.

HCU-1 divers went to work. Using 450 pound charges of plastic composition "C" explosive, a high detonating, sheering charge, they worked three days and set off two shots before the old hull was weakened sufficiently to warrant moving in with the half ton package pounding charge.
The divers were fast and efficient, if not a little nervous. No one knew what was aboard the cruiser when it sank - ammo, fuel - or how high it would blow. Of the direct capping method of priming that was used on the job, Lt. Delanoy said, "From the time the diver sets the cap into the charge, the possibility of an accidental explosion is always present. The caps are extremely sensitive, and it takes very little electrical charge to ignite them. As a safety precaution we secure all radios, transmitters and electrical gear. You can't have any kind of electrical transmission for 100 to 150 yards from the blast site if you want to live to tell how you set the shot. Even an electrical storm can detonate the charge, remote though this may seem."

The final pounding blast shook the whole Subic Bay area when it was detonated. Mud and water flew over a hundred feet into the air. The next day, when everything settled down again and the normally very clear water afforded at least a few feet of visibility, divers checked the battered wreck to see how well the job had been done. Well enough. The Rochester's bow section had been cut away clean and pushed down twenty feet. Another success for the HCU-1 team, termed by many as, "the best salvage divers in the entire U.S. Navy."

An interesting sidelight to the demolitions operation was that it was the first Harbor Clearance job of its type to be undertaken since the Second World War. The last one like it was carried out at Subic Bay toward the end of the war to clear the area of wrecks, and Lt. Delanoy, now HCU-1 Exec and recently awarded the Bronze Star, was an enlisted diver during that operation.

With the Rochester out of the way, HCU-1 will move immediately on to the next obstruction in the proposed taker channel - a Japanese merchant ship sunk by American B-25 bombers in the last days of the Phillippine campaign in 1945. Another demolition clearance operation is expected to be necessary there too.

Not much rest in sight for Subic Harbor Clearance divers, it seems.

"The Vietnam Era"

Famous Vietnam Quotes

Graffiti From the Head