

Command History 1967

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On the 1st  
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Naval Amphibious  
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Elements of River Assault Squadron NINE (RAS-9) and River Assault  
Division NINETY-ONE (RAD-91) continued training with the 9th Infantry  
Division's 3rd Brigade, using boats borrowed from the Vietnamese Navy (VNN).  
RAS-9 and RAD-91 were exercising with the Army in LCM operations. This  
training followed a four-day cycle set up by COMRIVFLOT ONE personnel:

- Day 1. Movement to the ship, lectures by ship and Flotilla personnel.
- Day 2. Wet net training and beaching and gunnery exercises.
- Day 3. Day and night exercises with several insertions and extractions  
at selected operation areas in the RSSZ.
- Day 4. Another exercise in the RSSZ with insertion and extraction, at  
various operation areas, and a return to the support ship. By  
February 5, five such cycles had been completed. Other elements  
of the squadron and division were undergoing training as  
observers aboard VNN RAG boats at Can Tho and My Tho.

During the TET holidays from 9-12 February training operations were secured  
and the time was used for boat maintenance and repairs. On the 12th of  
February, RAS-9 and RAD-91 began working with the 3rd Battalion, 47th  
Infantry, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division. In the first four-day cycle,  
"A" and "B" Company participated. On February 16, 1967, "C" and "E"  
Companies were scheduled to start the same four-day training cycle that "A"  
and "B" Companies had just completed. Increased enemy activity in the Long  
Tau channel of the RSSZ caused a change. COMNAVFORV on 16 February 1967,  
ordered RAS-9 and RAD-91 to support two companies of the 3rd Battalion, 47th  
Infantry, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division in the RSSZ. This message  
marked the end of training and the beginning of combat operations for River  
Assault Flotilla ONE. At 0800 hours, units of RAD-91 landed "A" and "B"  
Companies of the 3rd Battalion, 47th Infantry, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry  
Division in the RSSZ, thus began Operation River Raider ONE, the first U.S.  
Riverine Assault operation since the Civil War. Also on the 16th

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COMRIVFLOT ONE/COMRIVSUPPRON SEVEN COMMAND  
HISTORY - FEBRUARY 1967

On the 1st of February, 1967, COMRIVFLOT ONE/COMRIVSUPPRON SEVEN, Captain Wade C. Wells, USN, and the major portion of his staff were at the Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado preparing for their deployment to Vietnam. The advanced echelon of the command was divided between the USS WHITFIELD COUNTY (LST-1169) and the Headquarters for Commander, Naval Forces Vietnam, Saigon. Under the leadership of the Chief Staff Officer, Captain Edwin P. Smith, Jr., USN, this advance group of ten officers and fifteen enlisted was preparing for the arrival of the staff of River Assault Flotilla ONE and was overseeing the training of River Assault Squadron NINE (4 officers and 9 enlisted) and River Assault Division NINE-ONE (2 officers and 135 enlisted), both of which were embarked in WHITFIELD COUNTY. Serving as a temporary support ship, WHITFIELD COUNTY was anchored in Vung Tau Harbor, one mile from Vung Tau.

Elements of River Assault Squadron NINE (RAS-9) and River Assault Division NINETY-ONE (RAD-91) continued training with the 9th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade, using boats borrowed from the Vietnamese Navy (VNN). RAS-9 and RAD-91 were exercising with the Army in LCM operations. This training followed a four-day cycle set up by COMRIVFLOT ONE personnel:

- Day 1. Movement to the ship, lectures by ship and Flotilla personnel.
- Day 2. Wet net training and beaching and gunnery exercises.
- Day 3. Day and night exercises with several insertions and extractions at selected operation areas in the RSSZ.
- Day 4. Another exercise in the RSSZ with insertion and extraction at various operation areas, and a return to the support ship. By February 5, five such cycles had been completed. Other elements of the squadron and division were undergoing training as observers aboard VNN RAG boats at Can Tho and My Tho.

During the TET holidays from 9-12 February training operations were secured and the time was used for boat maintenance and repairs. On the 12th of February, RAS-9 and RAD-91 began working with the 3rd Battalion, 47th Infantry, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division. In the first four-day cycle, "A" and "B" Company participated. On February 16, 1967, "C" and "E" Companies were scheduled to start the same four-day training cycle that "A" and "B" Companies had just completed. Increased enemy activity in the Long Tau channel of the RSSZ caused a change. COMNAVFORV on 16 February 1967, ordered RAS-9 and RAD-91 to support two companies of the 3rd Battalion, 47th Infantry, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division in the RSSZ. This message marked the end of training and the beginning of combat operations for River Assault Flotilla ONE. At 0800 hours, units of RAD-91 landed "A" and "B" Companies of the 3rd Battalion, 47th Infantry, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division in the RSSZ, thus began Operation River Raider ONE, the first U.S. Riverine Assault operation since the Civil War. Also on the 16th

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of February, the arrival of the USS ASKARI (ARL-30) gave Commander River Support Squadron SEVEN (COMRIVSUPPRON SEVEN) a repair capability. The following morning, at 0800, Army and Navy personnel gathered at the Command Post in the RSSZ for a brief on the already-commenced operation. On the 18th of February, a Joint Tactical Operation Center (JTOC) was established on the WHITFIELD COUNTY. Search and destroy and ambush attempts by the Army failed to produce any significant contact with the enemy. However, positive evidence of his recent presence was ascertained.

On the 23rd of February, the staff of COMRIVFLOT ONE arrived in Danang and was transferred to Vung Tau on the 25th. The USS HENRICO (APA-45) stood in Long Tau Harbor on the 24th of February to relieve the WHITFIELD COUNTY as interim support ship for COMRIVFLOT ONE.

Captain Wells arrived in Saigon on the 27th of February after participating in briefings at CINCPACFLT Headquarters. RAD-92 arrived in Saigon on the 28th and was shuttled to Vung Tau and USS HENRICO during the day. At 0801 (local time) on 28 February Riverine Assault Force (TF-117) was activated under the command of Captain Wells. Units assigned to TF-117 were River Assault Flotilla ONE/River Support Squadron SEVEN staff, River Assault Squadron NINE staff, River Assault Division NINETY-ONE and NINETY-TWO and USS ASKARI (ARL-30). Captain Wells flew to Vung Tau on the 28th and broke his pennant at 1010 (local time) in USS HENRICO.

Significant among February 1967 activities for COMRIVFLOT ONE was (1) the change to an operational status on the 16th, (2) the arrival of COMRIVFLOT ONE on the 27th and (3) the activation of TF-117 on 28 February 1967.

END