



“THE ELSIE ITEM”

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
USS LANDING CRAFT, INFANTRY, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

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In This Issue:



The Longest Wait:
A Remembrance of D-Day



Reunion News



LCI Crew Photos

A Grateful and Proud Son Paints His Father's LCI

(See “About our Cover, Page 2)



*Father Joel
Osborne, son of
Thomas J. Osborne
who served aboard
USS LCI(G) 772*

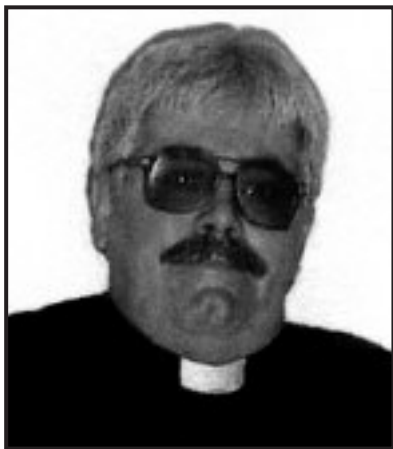


Official Newsletter of the USS LCI National Association , a non-profit veteran’s organization. Membership in the USS LCI National Association is open to any U. S. Navy or U. S. Coast Guard veteran who served aboard a Landing Craft, Infantry. Associate membership, without voting privileges, is offered to others.

Published quarterly by the USS LCI National Association. John P. Cummer, Editor. Any material for possible publication should be sent to the Editor at 302 Pinewood Cottage Lane, Blythewood, SC 29016

About our Cover:

This painting is the work of Father Joel Osborne, son of Thomas J. Osborne who served aboard USS LCI(G) 772 during the landings at Okinawa and Iwo Jima.. He is giving a print of this painting to our Association and plans are for it to be displayed with the LCI Archives at the Calvert Marine Museum, Solomon’s Island, Maryland. In response to my query for a bit of information about himself and how he came to do paintings of LCIs, Father Joel responded as follows:



“I am a 57 year old bi-vocational priest. I work for SCDOT [South Carolina Department of Transportation] to feed the belly and serve as an Anglo-Catholic Priest to feed the spirit. I have been married to the same woman for 36 years and I have two daughters with husbands and 3 grandchildren. I got started with Naval Art, because of my younger brother. He was doing it and got tired of using three colors (Haze grey, Nonskid black, and Hull bottom Red) and gave them to me.

“I paint the LCI to honor my father a GM(G) who served aboard the Lousy Civilian Idea during WWII. It is my pleasure to present you with this print to commemorate all those gallant men who put to sea in a mighty ship in a small hull.”

I asked Father Joel if he would do similar paintings of individual ships for LCIers. He replied, “I seldom sell the originals because of the amount of work, and no one usually wants to pay for the time and labor. I sell high quality prints for \$25.00 each. However, if someone wanted an original, it would have to go for around \$200.00. I will make the pledge to donate 10% of each print or painting sold to the organization as a way of saying “thank you” to the Greatest Generation.



“I can do the different variants, ramp bow, bow door, short square con, tall square con, round con, LCI(L), LCI(M), LCI(G), LCI(R) and LCI(F). If you give the hull number and basic paint scheme, North Atlantic Dark Green, Haze Grey, or Camouflage, I believe I can produce what you need. Thanks again and God bless! “

So, if you’re interested, you can reach this painter of LCIs at osborneWJ@dot.state.sc.us. His telephone number is 803-773-2264.



A Word from your Editor/President



IN THE INTEREST OF A LITTLE SAVING OF SPACE, I've decided that any sage comments from me can be combined under the heading of "Editor/President" instead of writing two separate pieces. In the future I might just encourage someone like Vice President Rod Scurlock to make regular comments in each issue. That would be a particularly good idea, I believe, because in this issue you will read about the intense effort to revitalize our State Directors' program that he is heading.

I do hope that each of you will take note of our new – and continuing State Directors and offer them your encouragement and support. Where there have been more localized reunions they have been most enjoyable affairs, and we'd like to see those good times of fellowship multiplied.

This issue is something of a potpourri of articles. I hope you'll enjoy reading about such things as Gene Januzzi's "Long Wait" before D-Day; Archie Krout's reminiscences about what it was like to be a cook aboard an LCI, Norm Wesley's account of making practice landings at Virginia Beach, and Tony Zito's being honored by his hometown newspaper. There are interesting comments from you in the "Letters to the Editor" as well. We do hope that it all is a good read for you—and that it will spur some of you to share your memories with us!

On a personal note, once again apologies are due for the lateness of yet another issue. This time it was the medical profession that intervened. To make a long story short, I had a warning shot fired across the bow about my heart. After some earlier surgery and a pacemaker implant I'm now getting ready for a quadruple by-pass on November 15th. As one of my LCI friends put it to me, "Welcome to the zipper club!"

God willing all will be o.k. and I'll come out of it with such an increased blood flow that I'll be ready to enlist and go to sea again! (Trouble is, the silly Navy has given up on LCIs!)

And don't forget—we want to see you all in Norfolk next April 18-23! You'll find the hotel reservation form in this issue so you can take care of that important detail right now!

Smooth sailing, Shipmates!

—John Cummer



Reunion News



A Visit to the 713...



...and a great Salmon bake!

Northwest LCI Association Meets in Portland

Northwest Director Gordon Smith reports that 10 LCIs, 8 wives and one guest met for a successful and enjoyable reunion, September 9-11 in Portland, Oregon.

We met at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Portland—a lucky draw. The Hospitality Room and the guest rooms were excellent.

During the business meeting a memorial service was conducted for our shipmates who have “passed over the bar” this past year. Rod Scurlock’s daughter has obtained our own special bell donated by the Shirmer Bell Company for this and future memorial services.

The following shipmates were remembered at the memorial service: Phil Cooper, LCI 481; Wilbur Ferris, LCI 1010; John Morse, LCI 1062; Einer Soderhold, LCI 399; William Turnbull, LCI 338; Phillip Walesby, LCI 699; and Eugene Wilkinson, LCI 1090.

On Saturday the group visited the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, following which they returned to the hotel for a social gathering and banquet. Our own musician, Jack Crocker, LCI 618, and his wife, Pat, provided music for the event. The banquet opened with a presentation of the colors by VFW Post 7824, Vancouver, WA.

LCI National Association Vice President Rod Scurlock was tapped to be the speaker for the evening and entertained the guests with stories and reminiscences from his days of serving with the Bureau of Land Management and Indian Affairs.

“Here was a man who had spoken to the relatives of Chief Joseph, Geronimo and other great chiefs as well as with the son of Will Rogers”, reported Gordon.

Highlight of the reunion was a trip to Astoria for a visit to LCI 713, now moored at her new home in Astoria.

“Oh, to once again tread the decks, climb the ladders, look at the compartments, enter the bridge and climb to the conning tower!” said Gordon, “It was an experience that flooded our minds with many memories, both good and bad. It brought back the days when we and our comrades served our country so long ago. We are so thankful to have the gallant lady, LCI(L) 713.”

The day of visiting the 713 was topped off with a Salmon bake sponsored by the Astoria Lion’s Club. “Fresh, delicious salmon was enjoyed by us all,” reported Gordon.



The group voted to hold their 2006 reunion in Couer d'Alene, Idaho. Dates and other details will be decided later.

Southeastern LCI Reunion Cancelled

Citing unexpectedly high costs for events scheduled for the planned January 19-22, 2006, Charleston, SC, reunion, Connie Mulherin, State Director for Florida, has announced that the event will be cancelled.

“We hope all our members in the Southeastern U.S. will plan to attend the national reunion in Norfolk instead”, said Connie.

E-Mail Changes/Corrections

LCI	Name	Correct E-Mail Address
78	Robert F. Hartman	rhartman@cfl.rr.com
448	Donald Bullock	burrbull@earthlink.net
454	Elmer A. Henninger	eah454lci@juno.com
508	Robert D. Gibson	rgibson@neb.rr.com
542	Jim Lazarus	papou23@metrocast.net
584	Robert J. Ascherl	rjsbashrl3@msn.com
680	Edward Graham	baldeagle102@yahoo.com
702	Edward C. Bather	nbather@cox.net
726	John. H. Castanza	jjcastanza@att.net
804	Earl Swain	swain@microlnk.com
814	Curtis D. Culpepper	cbpepper22@msn.com
872	Ralph M. Keenan	rbneenan47@msn.com <i>(Correction from last issue)</i>
000	Donald Hanner	charlie33@humboldt1.com

Please send any changes, corrections or new email addresses to Jim Talbert at tab626@cox.net



Welcome Aboard!

Again, it's a real pleasure to welcome shipmates who have joined us since our last issue. We're glad you found us and hope you find your association with us every bit as enjoyable as it has been for those of us who have been here. The welcome is hearty!

New Members

Edward C. Bather, Maple Grove, MN;
RT2C, LCI 702

Howard H. Behrens, Houston, TX;
LTGJ, LCI 774

Bernard A. Clark, Harbor Springs, MI;
LTJG, LCI 545

Robert E. Coburn, Fullerton CA;
GM3C, LCI(L) 472

Arthur H. Larsen, Willow Street, PA;
S2C, LCI 661

Alex L. (Leo) Severn, West Palm Beach, FL;
LCII(L) 693

James R. Sleight, Palm Springs, CA;
LCIs 329 and 327

Orvis I. Smith, Gulfport, MS;
GM1C, LCI 702

David O. Stanley, Baton Rouge, LA;
RM2C, LCI 976

Spencer J. White, Center Valley, PA;
LCI unknown

Kenneth K. Wiesmore, Santaquin, UT;
RM2C, LCI(G) 558 and LCI(L) 561

Michael D. Giansiracuso, Saratoga, CA;
LCI 805

Miles O. Landon, Monroe, LA;
LCDR, LCI 226

Ralph L. Langenheim, Urbana, IL;
LCI 561

James McGee, Lancaster, CA;
LCI(G) 455

Elmer W. Perzel, Ft. Myers, FL;
LCI(G) 346

Guy J. Turpin, Hot Springs, AR;
EM3C, LCI 1056

New Affiliates

Tyler B. Cropley, Sitka, Alaska;
Grandson of Raymond Beaumont, LCI 445

Spencer J. White, Center Valley, PA
(See the sidebar in this issue concerning
Spencer's offer to build custom models on page
12!)

Annie Flournoy, Brunswick, GA;
A widow paying for Life Membership!

New Members Paying for Life Membership

Stanley E. Barlow, Hacienda Heights, CA;
QM3C, LCI 725

New Life Members

Michael C. Acquaro, New Port Richey, FL;
LCI(L) 1067

Philip Buchanan, Washington, DC;
LCI 500 (Life Member #1000!)

Joseph A. Dumenigo, Somerset, MA;
LCI 568

Edward R. Gravius, Floral City, FL;
LCI 996

Affiliates Becoming Life Members

Peter Selan, Lewisberry, PA;
LCI 561



Letters to the Editor

Lots of interesting mail to share with you this time!

First, It was good to hear again from Shipmate Bob Bell, RN. Of Birkenhead, England:

Thank you for mentioning me in dispatches—January issue, page six.

I have just received my Issue 52 to go with my collection—excellent reading.

....Delighted LCI 713 is now nearing her 1945 vintage state, and has found a new home in Astoria as a part of Pier 39. Congratulations to Gordon Smith and the Amphibious Forces Maritime Museum on their achievements. With reference to our LCT, Mk3, 7074 restoration, we are still waiting for confirmation of a lottery grant which will enable the Historic Warships Preservation Trust to proceed with full restoration of said vessel.

Bet wishes from this side of the water.

Yours in comradeship,
S/M Bob Bell

And one of our own, Jerry Marder, LCI 758, now living in Asheville, NC, sent an interesting picture and a note about a memorable nautical "event" while they were visiting "over the waters"

My wife and I just got back from a week in London. It was a great trip. The HMS Belfast is permanently docked on the south shore of the Thames in London.

Our LCI was involved in a typhoon en route from Okinawa to Shanghai in September of 1945. Two of the LCIs in our group had their main masts broken during the storm. *HMS Belfast* was also approaching the Yangtze estuary. They spotted us and their Admiral signaled us and lauded our ships for our seamanship in coming through the storm. I found out that their log was in the British



National Archives. I went there and was able to read the original log of the ship. I am enclosing a copy of a page from 15 September 1945. Regrettably, they did not have the signalman's log of the exchange, but there is a brief note of our meeting. I got a kick out of seeing the entry.

Sincerely,
Your comrade in arms,
Jerry Marder.

(Sorry the format of that log cannot be reproduced here, but here is the entry to which Jerry refers.)

*0615—Sighted seven ships bearing 215, 12 miles.
0630—Identified ships as LCI(L)*

Frank Weaver, of Garland, Texas, who served aboard LCI 1058 relates one of the most unusual instances of ship handling that I have ever heard!

In February 1945 as a Seaman (Gunner's Mate Striker), I was assigned to the LCI(M) 1058. The ship was at Saipan waiting to go to Iwo Jima. Mortar crews had been army personnel and we replaced them. I guess all Navy personnel worked better.

Instead of going to Iwo Jima, we went into dry-dock for propeller repairs. Then we went on to Samar in the Philippines and up to Okinawa with an armada of hundreds of ships. We got in the tail end of a typhoon that was frightening. Operations at Okinawa consisted of shelling the



beach, making smoke and firing at the kamikazes.

Our most unusual event happened off a small island north of Ie Shima (I think it was Kure Shima) where we were sent to hide and radio the number of kamikazes that were coming low on the water to get under the radar

We were there several days around May 26th (My 19th birthday!), close to the island with our bow anchor out. We were swinging, so we put the stern anchor out as well.

A lone kamikaze saw us and circled us. Our Skipper, LTJG Purdy—or maybe it was Executive Officer J. K. Pounders—ordered full speed ahead with both anchors out! The result was that we kicked up a big wake but did not move.

The kamikaze dived at us from the stern and possibly led us as if we were underway. He hit the water a few feet off the bow where we would have been if we were moving. “Full speed ahead” with both anchors out may have saved our lives!

Frank D. Weaver

Lester Baribo, of Buckley, WA, who served aboard LCI(G) 1011 tells us of his involvement in a rather unusual court marshal and its resemblance to an incident related by author Herman Wouk in the well-known novel “The Caine Mutiny”:

...Except for the Court Martial scene, I can tell you stories as good as on the Caine. In the book there was a man named Stillwell who was given a Summary Court Martial and they were trying to convince him to plead guilty.

Aboard the 1011 we also had a man named Stillwell who was given a Summary Court Martial. It happened when we were in the Pacific, but we had returned to Pearl Harbor.

We were in the wardroom and the officers were discussing what we were going to do with this man. As the junior officer, I didn't say anything. Finally the Captain hit the table with his fist and said, “I know what we'll do—I will appoint Mr.

Baribo his counselor and he will convince him to plead guilty.”

They had the man restricted to the ship and I said I had to have control of the man. The Captain agreed. I lay on my bunk trying to think what I should do. Then I got the brilliant idea to go down to the legal office and ask for their help. They told me to send the man down to them.

The legal office wrote him up one of the most beautiful statements that I have ever seen. Since he was pleading guilty, I didn't have to go in the court but I was waiting outside to find out what happened.

The door opened and the Captain came out. He saw me, grabbed me by both shoulders and pushed me up against a bulkhead and said,

“Where in the hell did he get that statement? As soon as he read it everyone felt sorry for him and he hardly got anything!”

Now that is a true story. Shortly before the war ended I was transferred to LCI 756. What a difference!

Sincerely,
Lester E. Baribo

If you were at our New Orleans reunion you will remember Associate Members Roger Gray and Dennis Blocker put on commemorating their grandfather's service aboard LCIs. Roger dropped us a note with a request to which some of you may be able to respond:

...I have a small request. For my research, I'm collecting photos of crew members, the ships, etc. Also, I'm looking for any documents and maps. If you have anything that you think I might find interesting, please send it my way. In the past I have been sent original photos. When this happens, I take them and have them “photo quality” copied. Then I send the photos back via FedEx or UPS. I also have them insured for \$1500. To date, I've never lost anything. (Knock on wood!)



My mailing address is Roger A. Gray, 2104 Delvin Lane, Austin, TX 78728; phone numbers are (512) 989-8677 (Home) and (512) 351-0804. My email address is rogeragray@yahoo.com

Please feel free to call me on my cell phone any time of the day.

Respectfully,
Roger A. Gray

In our last issue we carried excerpts from the diary of Robert O'Conner's service aboard USS LCI(M) 1059 at Okinawa and, with it, the picture of Japanese prisoners aboard their LCI. Now we share another note and a photo of a Japanese prisoner aboard an LCI. It comes from Michael J. O'Tool of Tionesta, PA, who served aboard LCI 960.



The enclosed picture was taken aboard LCI 960 at the invasion or a landing at Lubang, P.I. Date unknown. The photo is of Dave Snider, RT 1/C, a crew member, escorting a Japanese prisoner aboard LCI 960.

We landed our troops and this Japanese soldier came running out of the woods and into the hands of an American soldier who had just disembarked. The soldier brought him back to the 960. Thus, we had to send a sailor to bring him aboard. I think Snider was chosen because he was one of the biggest and strongest men aboard. Notice the dark water line on Snider's and the prisoner's clothing. Snider had to carry the prisoner from the shore to the ship's ramp because of the high water.

We kept the prisoner under guard in hold number two until we got back to Leyte and there we turned him over to the Army.

Michael J. O'Tool
P.O. Box 246
Tionesta, PA 16353

An interesting email concerning the experiences of William R. Quillen, F1/C, of LCI 94 at D-Day, June 6, 1944, was forwarded to us by Ella J. Lewis, widow of Clifford W. Lewis who also served aboard LCI 94. She forwarded it to us at the suggestion of Lee C. Wittke who also served aboard the 94. If you were at the Normandy landings, this will undoubtedly bring back memories.

As we approached the beach at Normandy, Tommy Rhea and I were on the port ramp and we had it out as planned, but soldiers were not getting off so he and I were ordered by the Skipper to hustle them off by going compartment to compartment and yelling "Get out!" All the Army brass had gone. There was heavy shelling. Then we helped bring up three soldiers that were floundering in the water off the starboard ramp and put them down in number two troop compartment. That's when I heard glass shattering, so I went down in number two and stupidly asked if they saw any shells come through. It turned out that one of the three men we dragged out of the water was a LIFE MAGAZINE photographer and he was now on deck taking the pictures that were in the special edition about D-Day.

The glass shattering was from the wheelhouse directly below the open bridge above. Three German 88s had hit and killed our three buddies and wounded two or three others. After 50 minutes on the beach (it was supposed to have been 15) we backed off and stood offshore. We finally anchored away offshore.

Tommy and I were asked to get a fire hose and wash off the bloody deck just aft of the wheelhouse. After lunch I stood on the deck and watched an aerial dogfight between a German and an American plane directly overhead. The German was shot down. It was quiet all afternoon until about 6 PM when a JU88 swooped very low directly off the cliffs. He was so low that he flew between the masts of the ships. No GQ had been sounded. No one could shoot because the plane was too low. It was quiet then.



We anchored a few days during that bad storm; then went back to England where we got our steering repaired and took a load of 200 new soldiers back to France. They were kids who had been in the Army only six weeks.

You asked for my memories of D-Day and this is all I recall from 59 years ago.

Bill Quillen

That's mail call for this issue. We'd love to hear from you with anecdotes or stories you'd like to share. Keep those letters and cards coming in, folks!

Were You Underage When You Enlisted? VUMS is Looking for you!

Bruce Cottington, LCI 462, now a resident of Litchfield, Minnesota, told a bit of a white lie about his age and enlisted at age 16 in 1942. His story and that of other veterans who were underage when they enlisted is being told in the third volume of *America's Youngest Warriors*, published by Ray D. Jackson of Tempe, AZ.

Bruce, a member of Veterans of Underage Military Service (VUMS) is anxious that other LClers be included in this volume and urges anyone who did enlist while underage to contact the publisher at 710 East La Jolla Drive, Tempe, AZ 85282-5355. Telephone: 480-967-5661.
Email: raydjackson@att.net

The volume is scheduled to be produced in the spring of 2006.



Scurlock and Bleyhl Lead Campaign for New Members and Better Support to State Directors

Recognizing the need to improve the support for State Directors and to find LCers who have not yet joined our association, Vice President Rod Scurlock and Northwest Director Hal Bleyhl put their heads together and have drafted a proposal which has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

“I’m delighted at the initiative and sound planning that Rod and Hal have shown in putting together this plan which will certainly have a most beneficial effect on our entire association” said President John Cummer.

The plan envisions an improved program of support for incumbent State Directors and a vigorous recruitment of Directors for those states where they are still needed. It also envisions a more active role for National Directors by assigning them to the support of State Directors in one of four regions.

Chairman of the Board Jim Talbert has given his enthusiastic support to the program and has already supplied Scurlock and Bleyhl with lists of LCers who have not responded to previous invitations to join the LCI National Association. Jim has also agreed to serve as Coordinator of the State Director’s Support Program.

The plan as developed and approved is as follows:

In order to function more effectively, the country will be divided into four regions and each region will be assigned to one of the board members who will have responsibility for assisting the State Directors in their divisions as follows:

- Assisting State Directors in seeking out men who sailed in LCIs and contacting them concerning membership.
- Helping State Directors organize and maintain their respective state organizations.
- Assisting State Directors in monitoring

death notices and reporting the same to Chairman of the Board Jim Talbert.

- Assisting State Directors in following up on dues paid.
- Assisting State Directors in promoting attendance at national reunions.

By giving National Board Members and State Directors assigned responsibilities with job descriptions, they will have better direction upon which to proceed, thus, making for a stronger association.

The job descriptions are as follows.

National Directors

1. Attend board meetings.
2. Participate in telephone board meetings.
3. Assist State Directors in their assigned regions.
4. Maintain close contact with State Directors on a scheduled basis (e.g., monthly phone calls).
5. Submit reports of state activities, death notices, new members, etc. to the Chairman of the Board on a regular basis.

State Directors

1. Organize state chapters and plan reunions, lunches and other fellowship activities.
2. Recruit new members.
3. Report regularly to their assigned National Director on deaths, new members and activities.
4. Encourage attendance at national reunions and, if possible, attend themselves.

The following National Regions are hereby established:

Region I—EAST AND SOUTHEAST: Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New



York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Florida.

Region II—MIDWEST AND MID SOUTH:

Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Ohio and Minnesota.

Region III—GREAT PLAINS AND MOUNTAINS:

North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Arizona.

Region IV—PACIFIC AND NORTHWEST:

Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Alaska, Hawaii and California.

Discussions are now underway as to which National Director will be assigned to each of the regions.

Early efforts by Rod and Hal have already resulted in identifying several new State Directors and confirming some already designated as willing to continue serving. (See list of State Directors in accompanying article.)

This is a bold effort and it is being pursued eagerly and with professionalism ensuring that our Association will benefit greatly from it.

Our heartiest thanks to Rod, Hal and Jim!

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Reinvigorated State Director Program Launched

LCIers can look forward to more local activity—state reunions, luncheons, etc.—as a result of the newly invigorated State Directors program under the leadership of Jim Talbert, Rod Scurlock and Hal Bleyhl. There will also be an increased effort to locate shipmates who have not yet joined our association and urge them to come aboard.

Rod and Hal have spent a lot of time on the phone tracking down members, who in the past have volunteered to be State Directors, and determining if they are still able to be active. Additionally, they have sought out members in states where there was no director and have been able to persuade many to take on the responsibility.

“It’s a job, but it’s a rewarding job”, said Scurlock, “There are lots of opportunities to promote renewed friendships and make new acquaintances among those who served aboard LCIs”

There are several slots yet to be filled and some regional groupings still to be worked out in states where there are few members. Following is the list of State Directors as of the present. Members are urged to contact their State Director to let him know of their willingness to help out or just to be active.

State Directors As of October 30, 2005

Alabama—J. Byard Swift (LCI 1021),
P.O. Box 1298, Altmore, AL, 36504

Arkansas—Quentin C. Pace, (LCI (G) 70),
P.O. Box 207, Bradford, AR 72021

California—Jim McCarthy (LCI 685),
349 Idlewild Lane, Oceanside, CA 92054-5418;

Colorado—Vaughn Hampton (LCI 450),
5435 Estes Court, Arvada, CO 80002
vaughn.hampton@comcast.net

Connecticut—John F. Ring (LCI 603),
22B Heritage Circle, Southbury, CT 06488

Delaware—Leo F. Hannon (LCI 679),
1211 Hill Top Road Woodside
Wilmington, DE 19809

Florida—Connie R. Mulherin (LCI 561),
1520 Sea Gull Drive, Titusville, FL 32796

Georgia—B. W. “Jack” Lawson, (LCI 385),
99 Hermitage Way, Dallas, GA 30157
(780) 445-5526

Illinois—Duane E. Luallen, (LCI 567),
2809 Lake Plaza Drive, Vandalia, IL 62471-3809

Indiana—Gordon P. Armstrong (LCI(M) 636),
608 E. Lake Street, Knox, IN 46534

Iowa—Wayne Bryant (LCI 237),
24973 Mahogany Road, Underwood, IA 51576

Kentucky—Wilbur Cundiff, (LCI 446),
4605 Sandhill Road, Louisville, KY 40219

Maine—Richard L. Moore (LCI 436),
3 Lantern Lane, Cumberland, ME 04110

Maryland—W. Martin Atkins (LCI(G) 560),
26417 Silver Lane, Crisfield, MD 21817

Massachusetts—Lawrence Antaya, (LCI 951),
122 Glen Oak Drive, Springfield, MA 01129

Michigan—Floyd Van Horn (LCI 461),
480 East Chippewa Road, Midland, MI 48640

Minnesota—Bruce Cottingham (LCI 462),
Box 919, Litchfield, MN 55355-0919
bmcott@hutchtel.net

Mississippi—Robert J. Polson, (LC(41),
108 N. 14th Avenue, Laurel, MS 39440

Missouri—Frank Ruxlow ((LCI 710),
1195 Jere Road, Arnold, MO 63010



Montana/Wyoming—John K. McBride (LCI 538),
P.O. Box 1099, Buffalo, WY 2834-1099

New Hampshire—Dr. Walter Griggs (LCI 866),
7 Pine Drive, Hanover, NH 03755

New Jersey—Henry Levine (LCI 606),
67 Jean Street, Lakewood, NJ 08701-7321

New Mexico—Clinton Greenback (LCI 816),
3311 Taos Court, Deming, NM 88030-8606

Nevada—Leonard “Tim” Young, (LCI 809),
126 Juanita, Incline Village, Nevada 89451
(208) 863-0012

New York—Warren G. Bolling, (LCI 1002),
P. O. Box 112, Greenhurst, NY 14742-0112

North Carolina—Crayton G. Hall, (LCI 618),
88 Wilkie Way, Fletcher, NC 28732
Sparkyhall125@Juno.com

Ohio—James J. Aydelotte (LCI 26),
3710 S. Goldfield Road, #425
Apache Junction, AZ 85219-6690

Pennsylvania—Lloyd Beary (LCI 577 & 548),
222 Greenville Ave., Clarion, PA 16214

Rhode Island—Alfred E. Caron (LCI 685),
1363 Pound Hill Road, North Smithfield, RI 02896

South Carolina—Virgil C. “Kes” Kester, (LCI 78),
3116 Kline St., Columbia, SC 29205

Tennessee—John E. Acuff (LCI 974),
114 Dusstin Riadm Iajrudgem, TN 37830-4040

Texas—Lewis A. “Chick” Mason (LCI 407),
10033 Pack Saddle Trail
Fort Worth, TX 76108-4129

Vermont—Leonard Jacobs, (LCI 442),
674 Sykes Mountain Ave.
White River Junction, VT 05001

Wisconsin—Cleon J. Egar (LCI 598),
209 Hayes Street, Kaukauna, WI, 54130

Wyoming /Montana—John K. McBride (LCI 538),
P.O. Box 1099, Buffalo, WY, 82834-1099

Make your Hotel Reservations now for the Norfolk Reunion, April 18-23, 2006!

As plans are shaping up for another outstanding reunion, Armed Forced Reunions, Inc, our reunion planners, have released information on our hotel so that you can make your reservations in plenty of time.

The Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel is located in downtown Norfolk at 77 Waterside Drive. If you haven't seen Norfolk since your WWII days, you are in for one of the most pleasant surprises of your life. The entire downtown area has undergone a tremendous renaissance and is a wonderful place to visit.

The Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel is adjacent to Waterside Marketplace, which features over

100 specialty shops and restaurant including Outback Steakhouse and Joe's Crab Shack.

Each guest room is equipped with an iron and ironing board, hair dryer and coffee maker with complimentary coffee. Handicapped accessible rooms and non-smoking floors are available, but limited. Please request these special accommodations when making your reservations.

The hotel has an outdoor pool which is open seasonally, and an exercise room. A gift shop is located on the first floor. You may enjoy traditional favorites and a beautiful harbor view at the City Dock Restaurant (hours 6:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.), serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. The unique



harbor view creates a cozy atmosphere. You may relax after our tours and other daily activities with City Dock's specialty drinks, light meals and snacks. Room service is also available.

Valet parking is currently \$20 per night, and self-parking is available in the adjacent Dominion Tower Garage for \$5 per day with a limit of one vehicle per guest room. Check in time is 3:00 p.m.; check out time is 12:00 noon.

Airport Express Shuttle Service provides service to and from the hotel. You may call (757) 857-3991 for reservations. Current rates are \$22 one way fee for one person with \$8 for each additional person; Roundtrip, \$39 for one person and \$16 for each additional person. Cab service (Green and White, Black and White, Checker) is also available.

Their current rates are approximately \$22 per cab. For cab service you may call (757) 855-6611.

Should you require full hook-up service, you may contact the following campgrounds for information, reservations and directions: Holiday Travel Park, 1075 General Booth Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA 23451 (757) 425—0249. KOA Campground, 1240 General Booth Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA 23451 (757) 428-1444. Reservations should be made at least two or three weeks in advance.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair for the reunion, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheel chairs by the day and by the week. You may call their toll free number at (888) 441-7575 for reservations and more details.

Clip along dotted line and mail form to the hotel

**USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION HOTEL RESERVATION FORM
REUNION DATES: April 18-23, 2006**

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Arrival Date _____ Approx. Time _____ Departure Date _____

___ # of Rooms ___ # of people in room ___ Handicap Access?

___ Smoking ___ Non-Smoking

___ King Bed ___ 2 Double Beds

(If room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.)

RATE: \$92 + tax (currently 13%) for up to 2 people in room (\$15 for each additional person)
Rate will be honored 3 days before and after reunion dates, based on availability

CUT OFF DATE: March 1, 2006. Reservations received after 5:00 p.m. local time at the hotel on the cut-off date will be processed on space and rate available basis.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 73 hours prior to arrival

All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

___ AMEX ___ DINERS ___ VISA ___ MASTER CARD ___ CARTE BLANCHE ___ DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ Exp. Date _____

SIGNATURE *(required regardless of payment method)*: _____

Mail to:

Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel • 777 Waterside Drive • Norfolk, VA 23510

Tony Zito Honored in Hometown Newspaper

A very proud Tony Zito shared with us a story about his World War II service aboard LCI 575 written by Linda Grisolia, for *The Elmhurst Independent* which we're happy now, with Linda's permission, to share with you.

Linda commented,

"He was a pleasure to interview and a very sincere, friendly person. A local restaurant owner recently had a plaque made of the article. Tony was so happy he called me to come and see it."

Linda writes for three local papers; *The Elmhurst Independent*, *The Addison Independent* and the *Fra Noi*, an Italian-American paper. For each paper she interviews and writes about veterans.

Some of you living in or near Chicago might want to take Linda up on her offer:

"If you know of any veterans living in Elmhurst or Addison, Illinois, or veterans of Italian descent living in the Chicagoland area, please let me know".

Linda's email address is Grisorita@aol.com

ANTHONY ZITO WORLD WAR II VETERAN

By Linda Grisolia
For The Elmhurst Independent

Tony Zito was born and raised in Chicago. Drafted into the Navy when he was 18 years old, Zito went to Farragut Naval Station in Idaho for boot camp. After a brief stint at Camp Bradford in Virginia, Zito met his crewmates at a New Jersey shipyard and was assigned to the LCI 575, Landing Craft Infantry.



*Tony (center)
fresh out of
Boot Camp*

Zito remembered sailing by the Statue of Liberty and said "It was an exciting moment." He arrived in Solomons Island, Maryland, an amphibious port in the Chesapeake Bay area. Here, Zito and fellow crewmates trained new recruits from boot camp to handle the LCI.



*Tony, the Salty
LCI Sailor!*

The LCI was designed to deliver fighting troops to a beach quickly. Zito's ship had a crew of 25 men and three officers and could carry 200 soldiers. The flat bottom hulls were designed for beaching with ramps descending from each side of the ship. The design also meant the men on board were in for a rough ride, feeling every wave.

Zito's ship traveled down the East coast, through the Panama Canal and arrived in San Diego. Here, he struck up a conversation with a waitress at a hamburger stand, talking about Chicago. She asked if he had a brother in the Army. Zito did; his brother was a Staff Sergeant. However, he remembered seeing signs all over "A slip of the lip will sink a ship," and he replied no. He said, "I was fearful to say anything."

The next stop was Hawaii and the two brothers were fortunate to meet in port. Zito remembered seeing his brother's ship moored. He jumped overboard and swam to the other ship, yelling, "Don't shoot, I'm Navy." The brothers enjoyed a quick visit.

While the LCI traveled from the East Coast to the West Coast, many of the crew got tattoos in different ports and Zito was taunted to get more than the small one he already had and regretted. A letter from Zito's sister reached him in Hawaii telling him that 90 percent of his neighborhood "was lost" on D-Day. Zito said, "That night I got three big tattoos. I figured I'd never see home again."



Zito's ship received orders for the South Pacific, going from island to island from the summer of 1944 until the end of the war. Zito said, "You name an island...we were there."

One funny episode involved flying fish in the South Seas. The deck of the LCI was low to the water and every night flying fish flew across the deck and landed. Every morning, the sailors had to wash the fish off.

Zito's first job was fireman, caring for the engines and cleaning the bilges. He then became a seaman, steering the ship and running the radar. He learned to do everything on the ship. When on General Quarters, battle stations, Zito manned a 20mm anti-aircraft gun.

The ship traveled in a convoy and stopped at 90 per cent of the islands in the South Pacific. Zito's LCI converted to LCFF, Landing Ship Flotilla Flagship. Now, the ship no longer delivered troops, but carried officers. On the flagship, the officers instructed other LCI's in troop deployment and oversaw the operations. Zito said "it was an honor to be on board a flagship."

In 1945, Zito's ship received orders for Okinawa and prepared for the invasion of the mainland. Zito said, "God Bless Truman because he dropped the atomic bomb and the war ended...or else, maybe I wouldn't be here today."

When the war ended, the officers left the ship and the LCI deployed to China. Here Zito attended dances and rode in a rickshaw. While standing watch one day, he saw Chiang Kai -Shek and his wife. He mingled with the China Army and said the soldiers "were nice, it was a pleasure."

After several months in China, Zito deployed to Korea. One day while hiking in the mountains with buddies, Zito encountered three Japanese with big dogs coming towards them. Suddenly, the Japanese stopped and bowed to the sailors. Later that day, a truck driven by Japanese stopped to give the sailors a ride back to their ship. Zito was surprised. He said, "They made me and my buddies feel important; they bowed."

Zito was discharged from Great Lakes Naval Station in 1946 and received five ribbons, including one for the Philippine Liberation. He said "War was war, but I found myself many moments of pleasure."

He attended a reunion with his wife and his former shipmates told her, "If it wasn't for Zito, we wouldn't have made it." This surprised Zito and he said it was probably because "I was always gung-ho." He often told his crewmates, "Don't worry about it; we'll do it." He boosted everyone's morale and kept their spirits up by dancing, arm-wrestling and boxing on the ship and in port.

He worked at numerous jobs. He was a butcher for 20 years, owning three small "mom and pop" grocery stores during that time. He also was a Bridge Tender in Chicago and a Precinct Captain for the 31st Ward. Zito also did Sound Truck Advertising and worked for the State of Illinois until retiring at the age of 75.

An Elmhurst resident since 1968, Zito is a widower and has one daughter. He is recovering from cancer and enjoys reading, especially about boxing and baseball. Zito served as Post Commander and State Commander of the Italian-American War Veterans.



*Tony Zito today—
same great smile!*

Young Zito was a morale booster on board the LCI, always acting "gung-ho," dancing, arm wrestling and boxing. Now, he said, "I enjoy life and I really appreciate it...I love life."



“Pro-Tem” Officers Submit Biographies for Norfolk Reunion Vote

President Pro Tem John Cummer and Vice President Pro Tem Rod Scurlock have submitted their biographies as required by our by-laws in order to stand for election on a permanent basis at the Norfolk reunion. Notice is also hereby officially given that any member desiring to run for either of the offices will need to submit his biography in time for it to be published in the January issue of Elsie Item. The deadline is January 5.

John Cummer, Candidate for President

I was born in Memphis, Tennessee, October 12, 1924. My family subsequently moved to northern Minnesota and I graduated from Bemidji High School in 1942. After one semester at Wheaton (Illinois) College, I joined the Navy in January of 1943.

After recruit training at Great Lakes Naval Training Station, I was assigned to Gunner's Mate school at the same station. After completing that school, I was assigned to Amphibious Training Base, Solomon's Island, MD, and subsequently was assigned to an LCI crew. After training, we commissioned USS LCI(L) 502 in September of 1943 and returned to Solomon's Island for shakedown cruise.

We sailed for England via the Azores in January, 1944, and commenced training for the invasion of Normandy. On June 6, 1944, we landed troops of the Durham Light Infantry on Gold Beach as part of Assault Force George, the British Assault Force.

After further multiple crossings of the English Channel with reinforcements, we were stationed off Omaha Beach as a Control Ship until we were relieved and were ordered to sail to Edinburgh, Scotland, where we turned our ship over to the Royal Navy.

Following our return to the United States, I was assigned to shore duty at Naval Air Stations in Florida until my discharge in March, 1946. I returned to Wheaton College and completed my

Bachelor's degree there in 1949. While a student there I met and became engaged to Jeanette Williams who was my wife for 53 years after we were married in 1950.

After earning a Master's degree at Indiana University in 1950, I began a career in education with a three-year stint of teaching at Clearwater, Florida, High School. In 1943, I accepted a position at Florida State University where I stayed for thirteen years, teaching, counseling and working on my doctorate. Our one child, Joanne Mary, was born in 1961.

After completing a doctorate at FSU, I subsequently served in a variety of college and university administrative posts at the University of South Alabama, Orlando Junior College, Covenant College, John Brown University and Northwestern (MN) College before my retirement in 1991.

In 1958 I received a direct commission in the Naval Reserve Intelligence Program and served in the reserves until my retirement with the rank of Captain in 1984

In my retirement years I enjoy the hobby of building models of LCI. Several of these were placed in museums around the country by the LCI Association, and many more were made for individuals. There is still a model under construction on my workbench, but I have not been able to touch it for some time due to the pressure of other duties.

After serving as Editor of *Elsie Item* and as Vice President, I accepted the invitation to stand for election as President when Jim Talbert made his decision to retire.

My wife, Jeanette, died in November of 2002. In July of last year I married again, this time to Patricia Senn Breivik, a lady whom I had known for many years. We now make our home in Blythewood, South Carolina.



Roderick H. Scurlock, Candidate for Vice President

I was born in Tacoma, Washington, June 16, 1925. I attended Alder, Washington, Elementary School and Eatonville, Washington High School. I worked summers for the Forest and Park Service at Mt. Ranier National Park. I joined the Navy in September, 1943.

I took my boots at Farragut, Idaho, and Quartermaster School t Farragut also. From there I was sent to Bremerton, Washington, where I caught a liberty ship to Pearl Harbor. I was assigned to the LCI(G) 565. We sailed from there to Eniwetok, then to New Guinea and from there to landings in Leyte, Philippines; Mindanao, Philippines, and Lingayen Gulf in the Philippines.

After the Philippine campaign we sailed to Okinawa for the landings there. The Skipper recommended me for the V-12 program while in the Philippines and after we returned to Pearl Harbor from Okinawa, my orders were there to return to the States for the V-12 program. We arrived in San Francisco the day the bomb was dropped on Japan. I was sent to Oregon State College for the V-12 program. I was discharged with the rate of QM3/c in May 1946 and returned to finish college at Oregon State.

From 1951 until 1956 I worked for the USDA Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Scientists and Work Unit Conservationist. In 1956, I transferred to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and worked as a Supervisory Soil Conservationist at Coulee Dam, Washington, as Land Operations Officer at the Mescalero Agency in New Mexico, as Work Director and, later, Job Corps Officer in Washington, D.C. Following that I served as Superintendent of the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana and Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, DC.

In 1975 I retired to Boise, Idaho, and was a partner in Resource Planning and Management consulting firm, owner of Scurlock Surveying and Appraisals Company, an agent for Century 21 Real Estate, a partner in Interstate Appraisals, Inc. and am currently a partner in Associated Earth Sciences, Inc.

I am married to Ruth Scurlock and we have two children, a daughter, Linda, who is a professor at St. Martin's College in Olympia, Washington, and a son David, whom we lost in 1977. We have a grandson Kristofer and his wife Leah, a granddaughter Heather, a son-in-law, Robert Miller, who is also a professor at St. Martin's and five step grandchildren, Rob, Darla, Kim, Johnna, and Jamie.

In 1977 I was appointed as Idaho Director for the USS LCI National Association and in 1998 as Director for the Northwest LCI Association. In 2003 I was appointed Western Director for the USS LCI National Association.



From Small-Town Indiana Boy to Ship's Cook, First Class

The Wartime Memoirs of Archie Dale Krout, LCI 19

Every once in a while, one of the many memoirs we receive seems to stand out and beg to be shared with other LCIs. Archie Dale Krout, who now lives in Crawfordsville, Indiana, sent us such a memoir and, although it is too long to include it all, we are sure you will enjoy some excerpts from it. We'll send the document to the LCI Archives at the Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons Island, MD, where you will be able to order the entire document if what you read here tempts you to read it all.



*Archie Krout,
Ship's Cook, First Class*

Archie was working in a war plant in Lafayette, Indiana, when he decided to join the Navy in August of 1942. Sent to Great Lakes Naval Training Center, he describes his "boot" training as follows:

I was sent to Building #788 in Camp Dewey [How many of you can remember the number of the building you were in for boots?] where for about

forty of us it became home. The one in charge was a regular Navy Chief who became "our mother" and taught us many things Mother never knew. There were many new words to learn such as deck for floor, portholes for windows, hatches and companionway, port and starboard and, above all "YES SIR". We learned how to peel potatoes, wash our own clothes, sleep in a hammock, get up early, stand watch over a drain pipe, clean the head (toilet). We marched everywhere we went, learned right from left steps, learned to speak only when spoken to and, above all else, follow orders to the end. It was a different way of life, but not hard to learn.

Archie applied and was accepted for the Cooks and Bakers School at Navy Pier in Chicago. He must have done very well there, for he tells us that he was given his third class petty officer's rating upon completion.

After a thirty day leave he was on his way to Solomon's Island, Maryland, where he was given orders to report to USS LCI(L) 19. His description of his first impressions of an LCI will undoubtedly trigger many memories.

The ship was anchored in Chesapeake Bay when I went aboard at night. It was cold and I was bundled up in my pea coat with my records and my sea bag and was taken to a pier for transportation to the ship. I had no knowledge of what it looked like or how big or small it was. I was just a kid wishing I was back home in Indiana.

Soon a small boat came with a sailor in it. They picked me up and took me to my assigned ship. I tell you now I never saw so much water and cold! The spray of the water froze on my pea coat. It was March 18th that I boarded the LCI #19 at about 8:00 P.M. This was the most water I had seen in my life. Lake Michigan was a pond compared to the sea I would be sailing in. When we pulled up along side the ship all I could see was a big, black sheet of grey steel.

'This can't be a battleship', I thought. 'Somebody must have made a mistake'.



USS LCI 19, Archie's Ship



The sailor helped me throw my gear on board and a hand came down and helped me on board. There were no stairs or rope ladders. The fellow who helped me on board was the radioman whose name was David Berwick and he came from Port Arthur, Texas. He took me to the ward-room where the Captain, Executive Officer and Engineering Officers took my orders. (These men were only about the same age as I was).

They took my orders and records and ordered Berwick to find me a bunk in the crew's quarters and told me they would see me in the morning. I hit the sack and about 6:10 A.M. they awakened me and showed me the Galley which became my domain for the next two years.

The ship had not had a cook and everyone had taken turns cooking, so when I came aboard it was a relief for everyone. It was nice to be needed. It sure was tough for a while, as the galley did not have all the convenience of the school, but every crew member was congenial and I soon got the hang of using the Weber perfection stove, dehydrated food and frozen meat. I found out later that we did not have a lot of selections and had to rely on my ability to bake cookies, doughnuts and such to fill up the vacancies.

The new cook was heartily welcomed and made important contributions to the morale of the crew with his effort with "cookies, doughnuts and such " There was one other member of the crew that everyone was glad to have aboard.

I soon got accustomed to cooking for twenty eight men and three officers. The whole crew was under the age of 24, but the Navy was smart enough to place a Boatswain's Mate First Class aboard. He was Regular Navy with several hash marks on his sleeve. He kept us afloat and taught us all how to run the ship. By the time we got to Bermuda he left us and returned to the fleet.

In March of 1943, LCI 19 sailed from Norfolk for North Africa, via Bermuda, a crossing which Archie reports took them "just six days short of a month". He describes the crossing as follows.

During our cruise across the Atlantic it was fairly

smooth except for a day or two when we were in a storm. No cooking that day and most all were sea sick. We had sea rations and crackers. I found later that in rough water I could put a rail around the stove and fill my pots and pans one-half full and it would not splash out when we were underway.

The ocean was smoother in some places and rough in others and we saw many flying fish, but not many birds until we got close to land. We just plugged along at eight knots until we saw land. We passed the Straits of Gibraltar on the night of April 11-12.

The small-town Indiana boy was introduced to his first foreign culture when they made port at Tenes, North Africa.

Tenes was a walled city, not much to see, but sort of spooky. It looked like the pictures you see in the Bible of towns of long ago. We were there a week and then were sent back to the town of Arzue, North Africa to exercise at landing with the Army. We had to do our laundry at night as daytime was too dangerous.

And then came the first of Archie's several brushes with well-known people:

One afternoon our LCI 19 was asked to give a one-ship demonstration of beaching for General George Patton. This demonstration was on a beach near a town where we had never beached before. We got stuck on a sand bar and had to put the troops off in nearly waist deep water.

Ol Blood and Guts was so angry he kicked the sand with his boots and cursed a few choice words at us, yelling at the top of his voice to 'bring that blankety-blank ship in!' To make matters worse, we experienced our first air raid. We shot a lot of holes in the sky, but no one was hurt. The ship did have holes from the German plane.

After being fitted out with radar scopes and a new Sperry Gyro compass, the LCI 19 moved to Bizerte to join other LCIs as a part of Flotilla One. Two other flotillas joined them at Bizerte which became their base of operations for the next year and a half. Entering Bizerte for the first time was quite an experience.



Our ship was one of the first to go in. We had to go through a canal to reach the French Submarine and Air Base, which was on a good-sized lake about 3 or 4 miles from the Mediterranean Sea. In the canal, or channel, were two or three sunken ships which made it hard to get by. In the daytime we would tie up to the dock at the Sub Base, but at night we had to anchor out in the lake because the Germans bombed us regularly every night. The Germans at this point had been driven out of North Africa.

Then came the invasion of Sicily.

It was a stormy night, pitch black, and the only time we could see the compass was when lightning would flash. By the time the storm was over we didn't know where we were. We saw an LST on our starboard and fell in behind it. Finally we joined up again with the convoy. About that time a German airplane came over spitting lead and dropping bombs but nobody got hurt during that raid and the plane got straight out.

We landed our troops at Gela, Sicily, when it got dark on July 10, 1943. We stayed there for a while as a bomb blast had knocked out our electrical system, which we repaired ourselves. Sometime during the night we received orders to return to Bizerte for more troops.

The role of LCI 19 changed as it was designated a flagship.

After the Sicilian invasion we returned to Bizerte, North Africa where our number three troop compartment was converted into a radio-communications room in preparation for the invasion of Salerno, Italy. Our ship was designated as the Flagship with a full Commander, Robert Morris, USN, aboard. We were one of several flagships needed as the beachhead was to be so large with many ships of all kinds involved.

Our flagship was designated to direct operations on "Beach Red" and we were to stay there until the Army could secure the beachhead.

Early in September 9, 1943, we loaded British troops and headed for Salerno, south of Naples,

Italy. It was dark and, as we expected, the German Air Force dropped flares and bombs on us. We were lucky again and nobody was hurt. We landed at dawn and all except the 19 returned to Bizerte to bring in more troops.

We stayed in our "Red Beach" area directing operations and on many occasions we would beach our ship to take on casualties and carry them out to the hospital ship.

The Germans had a big gun on a railroad track that ran out of a tunnel. Once or twice a day they would roll it out and shoot at ships in the area. One day we were loading casualties when they came after us and we had to get off the beach in a hurry. A bobbed-tailed British battleship came to our rescue and knocked that railroad gun out of commission. We were sure glad to see that battleship.

After things quieted down a bit, LCI 19 moved to an anchorage in the Bay of Naples. Then came Archie's next brush with a renowned individual.

One day while anchored in Naples Bay, General Charles DeGaulle came down to the Dock Office about fifty feet from where we were tied up. He stood and talked to several people and we thought it was a big deal.

In December, 1943, Archie reports that LCI 19 received a new Captain and a new Ensign with interesting qualifications.

...at this time our Captain, Al Shea, was relieved and sent to England. Our new skipper was Max Roder. A new Ensign also came aboard by the name of Lusto. He had worked as a bellhop on a Great Lakes steamer for two summers!"

A week before Christmas we went to Taranto, Italy, with some British LCIs. We left Bizerte with about 20 ships and, of course, it was dark and we had bad weather. The new Ensign was so sick he never got out of bed.

We stayed at Taranto 24 hours and never got off the ship, returning to Bizerte just in time to eat Christmas dinner – turkey and cranberries – with



the Army. At this time Ensign Lusto was transferred off the 19 and replaced with Ensign Bill Grissom, a nice fellow from Alabama.

The Group Commander, Robert Morris, was promoted to Captain, and Ship's Cook Archie Krout became friends with him.

We had Captain Morris and his staff as flagship. Captain Morris was a regular Navy full Captain with four stripes and was from Muncie, Indiana. He had married a girl from Muncie who was the daughter of the owner of the Ball Fruit Jar Industry. We hit it off well, both being from Indiana, even though he carried more rank than I did.

At Anzio, Captain Morris was coordinator with the Army beach master. The Germans shelled us during the day and bombed us at night. We would move our anchorage every night so they would not know our position. One day during a raid, one of Captain Morris' staff was killed by a piece of shrapnel. On several occasions bombs fell close. Once as we were leaving the harbor one fell under the ship on an angle and exploded, raising the ship up and it spilled everything in the galley, knocking me to the deck and breaking the oil line so that it threw oil everywhere. Captain Morris was in the companionway by the galley and said with a grin, "By God, Krout, that was a close one!"

I picked myself up and answered,

"YES SIR!"

As we left Anzio we were replaced by a British LCI and learned later that it was sunk while on duty there. Again, it was a close call for us where we felt the protection of a higher power.

We went back to Pozzuoldi, near Naples, and stayed there until things were put in order for the invasion of France. While there, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal came aboard for inspection. He wanted to see how one of the expendable landing ships looked after four major landings—North Africa, Sicily, Salerno and Anzio, not to mention several other smaller ones."

Following landings in Southern France, Archie received a great piece of news from his friend Captain Morris.

Captain Morris came by my galley and asked,

"How would you like to go home, Krout?"

I thought he was kidding, but he was serious. He said,

"Pack your bag and go home. There is an AKA transport ship with your name on it and if you ever get to Muncie, Indiana, I'll buy you the biggest steak you can eat!"

He shook my hand with a big grin and said good-bye.

And so ended Archie Krout's service aboard LCI 19. But it was not the last time he was to see his old ship. He was subsequently assigned as a cook in the general mess at Key West, Florida, and while there, the 19 came through on her way to the Pacific.

The LCI 19 was refitted and a new crew came aboard. While I was at Key West I went aboard and relived a lot of memories. The new officers and crew were going to San Diego, California, and then on to the Pacific but by the time they got to San Diego the war was over. I later found out that the 19 was purchased and gutted to be used for shipping wheat.

And Archie concludes.

IT WAS A GREAT ADVENTURE THAT ANYONE WOULD HAVE BEEN PROUD TO HAVE HAD.



The Longest Wait – A Remembrance of D-Day

By Gene Januzzi, LCI 530

*If you have been around the LCI Association for long, you will recall that Gene Januzzi is the author of *Bright Star*, a novel reflecting his wartime experiences as skipper of an LCI. Last year, as the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings was being commemorated, Gene described his experiences in a piece written for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. It's a good piece of writing, and I am glad to share a portion of Gene's incisive remarks with you.*

Among my memories of that English springtime before June 6, 1944, one of the strongest is my recall of the strain of the long wait for the assault on the Nazi-held Normandy beaches of France. We had arrived in Falmouth in Cornwall on the southwest coast of England in February. We were LCI(L) Flotill 11—36 ships of Landing Craft Infantry (Large).

D-Day at Normandy has been called in novel and film, "The Longest Day." The stretch of days from February to June 6, 1944, I call it "the longest wait." We knew from the beginning why we were in England. As yet we didn't know when or where the cross-channel invasion of France would take place.

I have a rather fond memory of Cornwall, warmed by the meandering Gulf Stream. Camellias bloomed in February that year. Daily in that springtime we trained for what was to come, sortieing from Falmouth harbor, landing troops on beaches, keeping the ships in shape, waiting.

My ship was LCI(L) 530, the flotilla flagship. We carried flotilla Commander A. L. Warburton, and his staff of six. By stages we moved eastward to other ports in Cornwall and Devonshire. By May we were in Dartmouth, moored to buoys in the upper reaches of the tidewater Dart River. A rod from our mooring place led up a hill to Agatha Christie's lovely home – Greenway House – which became our flotilla headquarters.

There we waited. In late May, in the quiet, bucolic setting of the dead end of the Dart River, I was in my cabin studying the operations orders for Operation Overlord. The orders had been delivered to me, as commanding officer of my ship, in



LCI's Enroute to D-Day. Painted by Combat Artist Mitchell Jamison

three large canvas sacks. At last I knew the "when" and the "where." And now the ships were "sealed." That meant that no one could leave the vicinity. Commanding officers, if they wished, could walk up hill from the dock to Agatha Christie's house.

Now we waited for the signal to execute the operations orders. Overlord was the overall air-sea-land plan for the invasion of France. Operation Neptune was the Navy part of Overlord. The assault would cover a 60-mile front in the Bay of the Seine. By now I had a special assignment. Commander Warburton had been designated assault wave commander of the Western Task Force. My ship had been fitted out with the latest technology: radar and special communications gear. LCI(L) 530 was detached from duty as flotilla flagship. Because of the enormous communications gear, all tubes and cabinets, took up so much space below decks, we would take aboard only two dozen of Gen. "Lightning Joe" Collins VII Corps. As part of our assignment we would land them on Utah Beach on D-Day, which was scheduled for June 5.

My first assignment: Sortie LCI(L) 530 from Dartmouth, carrying the assault wave commander and the VII Corps personnel, to rendezvous at Dart Buoy, four miles in the channel off Dartmouth, with Force U, the Gunfire Support Convoy, coming up from Plymouth at H-hour minus 17 hours on D-Day minus one. That would be at 1230 hours Double British Summer Time, 17 hours before the invasion.



During that part of the wait, the days passed swiftly. The troops boarded the ship on June 2. We held gas mask drills and church services – Catholic, Protestant and Jewish. The troops passed their waiting time playing poker on a blanket on deck with scrip currency they had been issued for use on the far shore. We called it “scrip poker.”

Now the wait was for a signal from Supreme Headquarters. It was to come by messenger. If we were to land on June 5, as scheduled, we would receive by hand on the night of June 3 the message, ON WEST ONE, meaning OPERATION NEPTUNE WEST GO. If the message read TWO, it was no-go. We waited for the messenger.

Near midnight on June 3, the sailor on watch brought an envelope to my cabin. Inside was the message, ON WEST TWO. Supreme Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower had made his agonizing decision to postpone because of the weather.

So there was another day of waiting, of uncertainty, more time to write letters, more time to memorize courses and speeds to the beach. On June 4, the weather cleared. Near midnight again came the envelope. This time it was ON WEST ONE.

Just after noon on June 5, LCI(L) 530 was under way, alone, one small ship among 6,000 ships and craft, carrying a few men among millions in the gigantic effort of Overlord. At Dart Buoy we waited for the gunfire support convoy. All eyes westward, we were excited by the appearance on the horizon of the barrage balloons of Force U, swimming over the sea like a school of friendly fish. The ships to which they were moored gradually took shape.

Heading the convoy was the Bayfield, an attack transport and flagship of Force U. She was headquarters for Adm. Don P. Moon, task force commander, and for Gen. Collins. Other ships in the convoy were the ancient battleship Nevada, the U. S. cruisers Quincy and Tuscaloosa and the British cruiser Black Prince, two other transports, four destroyers, two sub chasers, a PT boat and my LCI(L).

The immediate objective of Force U was Utah Beach, near St. Mere Eglise on the Cotentin Peninsula. To the east, Force O would assault Omaha Beach at Vierville Sur Mer with the V Corps. Still farther east, Force B, carrying forces of the

British Second Army, would hit Gold, Juno and Sword beaches near Caen.

All afternoon on June 5, Force U sailed eastward along the Channel coast. Off Portland Bill at dusk, the convoy turned southeast, and in darkness, south, down a swept channel marked by dimly lit buoys toward the Normandy coast of France.

Shortly after a black midnight, the convoy arrived in the transport area, the staging point for the amphibious assault on the beaches 12 miles southwest. Speaking into the voice tube, I gave the order to the wheelhouse below to stop engines. The battleship, cruisers and destroyers deployed to positions from which they would deliver fire on the far shore.

As we waited, I sensed my smallness and loneliness among the immense forces that at last had been unleashed. I saw the glow of bombs bursting silently on the enemy shore, watched a giant outburst of anti-aircraft fire that hosed and spewed and flowered in a merry hell of light and color. I heard and saw in the light of the anti-aircraft fire the C-47s flying low-towing gliders toward the beach. They returned without the gliders.

At H-hour minus two hours, the commander came up to the conn and told me to get under way slowly down the swept channel to Point Zebra, a ship standing just off Utah Beach. As my ship moved, the aerial bombardment and the anti-aircraft fire ended. I heard and smelled the gunfire of the Navy ships. Dawn diluted the night.

As we neared Point Zebra, my eyes were on the beach. German 88s sent up geysers of water and sand at the shoreline. I stopped engines and waited for a signal from the control vessel. It was the last wait. From the vessel came a one-word semaphore message: PROCEED.

I LOOKED AT THE COMMANDER AND HE NODDED. I GOT MY SHIP UNDER WAY AND HEADED TOWARD THE BEACH.

“All engines ahead full,” I said into the voice tube, “Steady as you go”.



IN MEMORIAM

Sailor's Rest

We thank Joe Flynn, El Cajon, CA, of LCI 347 for this lovely verse to include with the list of our Shipmates who have "sailed home at last."

*What do the billowing waves impart,
And repeat and repeat with each splash?
What is that pounding in my heart?
I'm sailing home at last.*

*The salt spray stings my naked cheek,
And the wind sings in the mast.
But it only sings, because it knows,
I'm sailing home at last.*

Allan J. Burke, LCI 19	Dayton Carter LCI 371	John C. Smeland LCI 495	E. Clifford Ziemer LCI 812
Clem Starkey LCI 26	Daniel T. Murphy LCI 396	Carl A.Yoh LCI 524	A. Paul Dextrader LCI 882
Eugene Melan LCI 31	Einar Soderbolm LCI 399	Quinton B. Arledge LCI 526	Henry G. Schipmann LCI 980
Stanley P. Kosakowski LCI 39	Eugene C. Loren LCI 404	Donald O'Donnell LCI 538	Gerald D.Mauk LCI 983
James Blankenship LCI 76	Loran E.Schuh LCI 438	John R. Hazel LCI 562	John H. Barnes LCI 1010
Edwin J. Hoffman LCI 214	Edward F. Whittaker LCI 351	John Craig LCI 588	Roman Drake LCI 1021
Calvin W. Whitten LCI 223	Dr. David W. Hughes LCI 456	Donald T. Cartmill LCI 623	Edwin J. Hoffman LCI 1064
William L. Harnes LCI 226	Sam B. Saunders LCI 457	Gerald Nash LCI 626	Patrick L. Murphy LCI 1069
Isaac N. Perry LCI 235	Steven Kuroski LCI 458	James G. Briggs LCI 686	Larry Roth LCI 1077
Edward N. Korpinen LCI 332	Henry B. Meyer LCI 464	Alex L. Sevrans LCI 693	
Howard Sawyer LCI 336	William E. Dovillers LCI 481	Thomas A. Moody LCI 726	
Carl K. Mackie LCI 346	William F. Hughes LCI 491	Berdie Anders LCI 760	



Like a Day at the Beach

By Norman F. Wesley, SM2C, USS LCI 368
Pittsburgh, PA

Norman Wesley shares with us some memories of practice landings on Virginia Beach. Like many of us, his LCI managed to lose an anchor there, but they were able to parlay their loss into an unexpected advantage!

I relate the following to record a particular day of amphibious training. The routine is familiar to Navy veterans, but I detail it here for those readers who are not acquainted with the on board training experiences in the Amphibious Forces during World War II.

After boot camp and Signal School at the Naval Training Base at Bainbridge, MD, I served on an LCI(L) training staff (Group 26) for a year at Solomons, MD, Amphibious Training Base (1943-44). We trained ship's officers and crews in an accelerated two weeks of intensive training on their LCIs before they were assigned to overseas duty.

The rigorous orientation period included night maneuvers, screen and smoke laying, anti-aircraft firing, berthing, emergency drill exercises, formation tactics, fueling, towing, communications (signal flags, flashing light, radio and semaphore), docking procedures and beach landings.

Training was done in Chesapeake Bay. "Bay" is a little misleading to some landlubbers. This body of water has some of the impressive qualities of the ocean. It can generate some pretty lofty swells, attention-getting weather and, at its widest points land is out of sight.

This particular training exercise had to do with a beaching operation and the simulation of landing troops one sunny day at Virginia Beach, VA, which is not far from the amphibious base.

The procedure called for our group of LCIs to stream in single-line formation to the beaching site. At a signal by the commanding officer, ships would reconfigure into a horizontal line and head into the "enemy" beachhead.

As a signalman in the conning tower with the captain of LCI 368, I had a panoramic view of the friendly invasion. With binoculars, I could survey the wide stretch of sand, vacation homes and young ladies sunbathing on the beach.

And what a sight, I thought, for the vacationers to see these ships approaching to hit the very beach on which they had front row seats. It brought the reality of a far-away war close to home and must have given observers

a sense of pride and excitement. For a while, anyway.

The beaching is supposed to go like this, if you LCI veterans will bear with me. On signal, the LCIs head for the beach in a formation parallel to the beach. At a prescribed distance, anchors are dropped. The anchor cables are payed out from the fantail winches, allowing the ships to continue forward while still tethered to the anchor.

Being keel-less, the ships can proceed into the surf and are run aground, hence the amphibian logo symbolized by the alligator. Once beached, catheads are projected, or on some types, front portals are opened, enabling the troops to exit and make their way to the beach. When the troops have disembarked, ramps are withdrawn, bow doors are closed and the LCIs withdraw.

To do this, the winch begins to reel in the anchor cable and, because the anchor is holding fast farther out where it has been dropped, the ship literally pulls itself back into deep water. The ships weigh anchor and are directed to return to port.

That's the way it is supposed to happen.

On this day, however, the cable broke on the Group Commander's ship from the take-up tension and our capability to back off was lost and we sat there like a beached whale as the sun set on Virginia Beach—and on us.

Not being in deep enough water, our engines and generators were inoperable; and, eventually, the tide left us "broached", a term with which we were not especially acquainted.

Because we were listing, in the dark and without power, it was decided that the officers and crew would overnight at a nearby motel with real beds—and no reservations. The next morning, after a landside breakfast and at high tide, two bulldozers were dispatched to the scene to push us back into deeper water. The engines and generators kicked in and we proceeded back to port, no worse for wear, but without an anchor.

I have since wondered (a) was the Navy reimbursed for that broken cable, and (b) did our personnel records show that we had overnight liberty at a motel in Virginia Beach?

Kismet!



Did Your Crew Get Its Picture Taken?

Sorting through the photos that have been sent in over the past few years, I've found that there were quite a few pictures of LCI crews—some smartly attired in dress blues, lined up as for inspection, others hanging from the ship in interesting poses. Thinking you might enjoy seeing what we looked like 60 years ago, here's a few for you.



Here's one sent in by Ned Hedger of the crew of the 614, somewhere in New Guinea. "There are three people in the shot that are NOT members of the 614," says Ned. Can you spot them?



And just to show you how well we could clean up, how about this one of the crew of the 573, taken sometime "early '46."

Have you got a good crew's picture you'd like to share?



... and here's one of the crew of LCI(M) 809 taken in Panama. I've lost track of the person who sent it (he identified himself as the one in the far right, top row, "next to the Army Doc." His comments on Sampson, (bottom row, second from the right), "Best Steward's Mate in the Navy!"



... but this one can hardly be beat! Leo Janetis, LCI(G) 68, sent me this picture of the crew of LCI(G) 70. They were hit by a Japanese torpedo that did not explode and took this picture as proof of their good fortune.



Now, here's one where the crew really worked at getting an unusual pose!

Walt Simonsen, QM1/c, of Baltimore, MD, sent this picture of the crew of LCI(L) 556, taken on the beach in Torquay,

England, sometime after the excitement of D-Day.



The Good Life Aboard LCI 78: Beer, Reporters and Steaks!

By V. C. “Kes” Kester, LCI 78
Columbia, SC

It’s a pleasure to share with you some anecdotes from the account of “Kes” Kester, who served as Commanding Officer of LCI 78.

Kes tells us that LCI 78, built in Orange, TX, was a part of Group 7, Flotilla 3, along with 77, 79, 80, 81 and 82 plus four more LCIs numbered in the 300s. After service in the Aleutians, the group went to Pearl Harbor, were fitted out as rocket ships and took part in the Pelilau operations. The first anecdote about the “good life” aboard LCI 78 comes from that period of service:

We were getting ready to leave for Peliliu and the bosn’s mate asked if we could take a ration of beer and I gave him permission to get it. A little later, he told me that we didn’t know when we might get back and asked to get another ration of beer. I asked him where he thought he could store it and he said in the tanks under the bow. I gave him the o.k.. After leaving for Peliliu, Commander McFadden asked for a water report from each of the 10 ships at noon. After we had been under way for several days, we reported 1200 gallons. The Skipper of the 77 signaled back to me and asked what we were going to do when we ran out of water and I sent a message back to him “We will drink beer.”

After bombarding Peliliu with rockets, the 78 was assigned the duty of being a courier ship.

Late one afternoon, I got a message to pick up two *Time-Life* reporters and transfer them to Admiral Halsey’s flagship. I think it was the *New Jersey*. Anyway, the flagship; was already underway, getting away from the island for the night. The flagship was going faster than I could and I could not catch it. I told the reporters that they would have to spend the night with us. The next morning, I got them to the flagship, but before they left they gave me a note. Bill Martin wrote, “Thanks for one of the pleasantest nights I have

ever sent with the Navy. Good Luck, 78”. Tom Lea penned, “Best wishes and many thanks to the good ship 78.”. They both had landed on the island where the fighting was. Tom Lea came back to the States and painted the sketches he had made of the fighting. In the *Life* magazine, dated July 11, 1945, appeared seven full-color pictures by him. I learned after the war that he wrote *The Bull Fighters*. I also heard that Bill Martin wrote a number of children’s books.



And, though it probably wasn’t typical of the day by day chow aboard the 78, this last anecdote suggests that, for at least a while, the crew did eat pretty well. It occurred after they had left Peliliu for Ulithi:

Late one afternoon, a tanker came in and anchored close by. We were completely out of meat. I told the signalman to ask the tanker if they could spare any meat. They signaled back that they could. I sent a couple of seamen over to the tanker in our little dingy. They came back with fifty pounds of boneless steak! I ordered the cook to prepare it all for our crew.

So, there may have been many days of uneventful duty, as there were for all LCIs, but on at least these three occasions, life was pretty good—or at least interesting—aboard the 78.

Thanks, Kes, for sharing this!



2006 LCI Calendar Now Ready!

The emphasis in the 2006 calendar is on the first LCI gunboats converted in the fall of 1943 to stop the barge traffic moving troops and supplies into and out of the various Solomon Islands. The main armament of these Flotilla 5 LCIs was a 3"/50 gun mounted over the well deck. A discussion of the gunboat activities is on the inside back cover and there are photos of three of the ships. One shows the LCI(G) 22 right after the conversion on its shakedown out of Noumea, New Caledonia; another shows a portion of LCI(G) 23 which gives a good view of the #50. The last shows a hole from a torpedo that bounced into the side of LCI(G) 70.



Other photos show the long walk to the beach the 31st Division troops made at Morotai, laying smoke in Lingayan Gulf, the 744 landing ANZAC troops, the 472 coming alongside a battleship for fuel and water, the 713 on her way to her permanent berth at the Amphibious Memorial Museum, the 416 sunk on Omaha Beach, the Balikpapan Landing, the Cape Sansapor Landing, and the 1091 on her way to San Diego for the 1995 national reunion. The back cover shows Flotilla 10 ships on their way to Normandy. This calendar continues to depict historical information about LCI action in World War II.

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