



"THE ELSIE ITEM"

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

• ESTABLISHED MAY 14-18, 1991, NORFOLK, VA •

OCTOBER 2006

ISSUE #57

"Mr. LCI," TINY CLARKSON STEPS DOWN FROM OFFICE

(See Page 2)



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

“Tiny” Clarkson to Step Down as Treasurer

Waging a serious battle with cancer, the man who has become the soul and heart of the LCI National Association, has reluctantly asked to be relieved of his duties as Treasurer.

It came as a body-blow to the officers and directors when Tiny shared this news with them. Along with all our members, they love and respect the man who, along with his faithful wife Janet, has served as our Treasurer since the founding of the Association. With his influence and knowledge extending far beyond the mere financial records, “Ask Tiny!” has become the almost automatic response to any question about anything concerning the Association.



Tiny reports that the unexpected news came after surgeons performed tests, including MRIs, which revealed the cancer to be at such a stage as to make surgery a dangerous procedure.

“It was a rough verdict to accept”, said Tiny, “but I have slowly come to accept that my team, consisting of my loving wife, family, Church, LCI shipmates, medical team, and the loving arms of my Lord, Jesus Christ, will see me through the dark days ahead to ultimate victory”.

Feeling the need to be relieved of their sometimes complicated and always time-consuming duties, Tiny asked that the board find a replacement as soon as possible. With great reluctance that process has begun.

How do you replace someone who has made himself irreplaceable?



A LENGTHY—AND IMPORTANT “WORD” FROM THE PRESIDENT

Shipmates!

These are days of great encouragement and of great challenge!

The Encouragements:

First encouragement - the process of organizing the new Affiliate's organization has begun!

Roger Gray, whose Grandfather, T.H. Mixon, served aboard LCI(G) 454, has volunteered to serve as Organizing Chairman for the new association of affiliates planned to carry on the memory of LCIs and the men who served aboard them. You who were at the New Orleans reunion will recall the wonderful display that Roger and his friend Dennis Blocker put together to honor the service of their grandfathers aboard LCIs.

Roger has begun the process of surveying our affiliate members and recruiting others to serve with him on the organizing committee with the objective of commissioning the new organization at our 2007 reunion in Branson, Missouri.

The reason we find great encouragement in this development is that it is a concrete step toward preserving the memory of LCIs and to add life and stability to our own organization. Elsewhere in this issue you will read more detail about all of this exciting news.

The second reason for encouragement is that more and more successful state reunions have been held! You will read of several of them in this issue. And more are in the planning stage. From California to South Carolina to Indiana and points between, dedicated state directors have helped shipmates gather together and enjoy fellowship in smaller, more intimate groups that have been greatly appreciated, especially by those who have not been able to attend national reunions.

The success of these reunions demonstrates how much LClers appreciate each other and value the opportunities to be together. That translates into loyalty to and appreciation of the national organization. For this we are thankful, indeed.

The Challenge:

In our lead article in this issue you will learn of the serious health problems facing our long-time Treasurer Tiny Clarkson which have made it necessary for him to resign. How very fortunate we were to have these two dedicated people doing this important work for all these years! Now with the loss of the valuable services of Tiny and his faithful wife Janet, your officers and board of directors have been searching for ways to meet this challenge.

The basic consideration we have to face is that, with our advancing ages, it will be quite difficult to find another member with the knowledge, strength and stamina to carry on with the Treasurer's duties for an extended time. It's just a fact of life. As Roy Age, our Overseer, commented, "In five years all of us will be between 85 and 90 Years of age!"



That's what puts the damper on what would at first seem to be the obvious solution i.e, find another member to take Tiny's place. It's possible that, given enough time and effort, we might be able to find one of you out there to take over. However, the experience Rod Scurlock and Hal Bleyhl have had in attempting to recruit and keep state directors suggests that may not be a promising option. We will continue to explore that possibility, but we don't see it as likely to happen.

Then, there's the possibility that one of our associates (our sons, daughters, grandkids, etc.) who obviously have much more vigor than we have might be willing to take on the job. That's a bit more viable and we are following through on a couple of possibilities there, but, because of the need to give relief to Tiny and Janet as soon as possible, we just can't wait on that possibility before doing something.

Meeting the Challenge

The approach to meeting our challenge is this: We buy the time for a search among our members and associates for a replacement, by contracting for a professional firm to do the work. This would enable us to give the immediate relief to Tiny and Janet that they need.

Nehemiah Communications, the firm that produces our newsletter, seems the most likely possibility to do this for us. Such assistance to non-profit organization is what they offer. Nehemiah Communications would do the day-by-day work under the supervision of Hal Bleyhl, who will hold the title of Treasurer. This would meet the requirement of our by-laws that the Treasurer must be a member of the LCI Association.

Nehemiah Communications has been involved in a number of military related projects. It was instrumental in the 60th Reunion of the Doolittle Raiders that was covered by Peter Jennings on ABC Nightly News and whose program won various design awards. They have produced promotional materials for the South Carolina State Guard Museum and for the 60th Reunion of the Tuskegee Airmen, which won an "Addie" award. They have designed similar promotional materials for the 555th and 82nd Airborne. For several years they have handled promotions and marketing for the Celebrate Freedom Festival (Ground and Air Show) which one year grew to be the largest non-Athletic event in the state of South Carolina with over 102,000 people in attendance. With Nehemiah Communications, our financial affairs will be in very capable hands.

The problem that needs to be addressed to implement this possibility is that our funds are limited and we need to find more sources of funds if we are to make this work. The funds are also needed if we are to maintain the quality and number of issues of the newsletter and to provide some financial assistance to our affiliates as they move out to begin their own organization

Your Part in Meeting the Challenge:

To address our financial concerns, the board has authorized a vote of the membership on a dues increase. This is a move we would like to avoid but it seems to be a reasonable request, given the relatively low dues we have at present and the level of services provided by the organization. We feel an increase to \$25 per year, beginning with our next fiscal year (May, 2007), is justified.



In this issue you will find a ballot for the dues increase which we ask you to complete and mail to me. If a majority of those voting support the recommended dues increase we will notify you in the next issue of the newsletter and the increase will kick in when you pay your dues next year.

Additionally, we are asking our Life Members to step up to the plate with a one-time contribution of \$25. Those of you who have opted for Life Membership have already demonstrated your loyalty to the LCI Association and we are counting on that loyalty now to help us find the funds we need at this time.

There it is, Shipmates! There's not a one of you that have not met and answered bigger challenges than this, but this is an important one for the Association we all value so much. It's an opportunity for you to show your appreciation for it and we hope you will find great satisfaction in knowing that you made a significant contribution.

We're counting on you!

John Cummer



WELCOME ABOARD!

Another great group of old shipmates have found their way to our Association - and there is an impressive list of new affiliate members. Look at that list of the three sons of William Barnes!

(We've listed them in order by ship numbers to assist you in finding old shipmates)

New Members

LCI 36
Matthew M. Browne
Louisville, KY

LCI 43
Robert Scoffern
Santa Rosa, CA

LCI 320
Henry L. McKinnon
Anchorage, AK

LCI 339
John Vickerman
Millersville, MD

LCI(G) 467
Thomas T. Gentry
Jefferson City, TN

LCI 519
Omar Griesenauer
St. Charles, MO

LCI 561
James R. Pignataro
Huntsville, AL

LCI 565
Arthur B. Bush
San Carlos, CA

LCI(M) 809
Peter D. Gammon
Lumberton, NC

LCI 1015
Edgar J. Beck
Higginsville, MO

New Life Members

LCI 405
Joseph C. Blazer
North Port, FL

LCI 444
Verlin Creed
Englewood, CO

LCI 452
John J. Wilkes
Danbury, CT

LCI 524
Eugene V. Allen
La Junta, CO

LCI 561
Connie Mulherin
Titusville, FL

LCI 685
Alfred E. Caron
North Smithfield, RI

New Affiliates

LCI 412
Jefferson T. Barnes
Stockton, NJ
Son of William Barnes

LCI 412
Patrick D. Barnes
Seattle, WA
Son of William Barnes

LCI 412
Timothy L. Barnes
Madison, NJ
Son of William Barnes

LCI 566
Claire Brettel,
Mission Hills, KS
Daughter of Harvey Wright

LCI 566
Mary Jo Wright
Redondo Beach CA
Widow of Harvey Wright,

Affiliates
Becoming Life Members
LCI 194
Michael Prentice
Fairbanks, AK

LCI 556
Susan Wakild
Wrightsville Beach, NC
Daughter of Raymond G
Wakild



POLL OF MEMBERS ON DUES INCREASE EFFECTIVE FISCAL YEAR 2007

Ouch! Nobody likes to be told about costs going up, but this one is a necessary one for us to face.

With the need to raise additional funding for the continued operations of the USS LCI National Association including the provision of services to perform the duties of Treasurer and to continue the newsletter in its present form and frequency, and in view of the declining number of regular members, the Officers and Board of Directors have recommended that, beginning with fiscal year 2007 (May, 2007) annual dues be increased from \$15 to \$25.

A majority of members voting must favor this proposal for it to be implemented. Please indicate your vote below:

Your vote must be received by December 31, 2006,

- I favor maintaining the Association's current level of service to its members and associates and funding for Treasurer's services which will require an increase in dues (\$25) effective May, 2007.

- I favor decreasing or eliminating services in order to help the Association stay solvent.

Please submit your vote to:

John P. Cummer, President, USS LCI National Association,
302 Pinewood Cottage Lane,
Blythewood, SC 29016.

Important: In order to maintain confidentiality of your vote, put your name and address ON THE ENVELOPE in which you mail your ballot but NOT on this ballot. Ballots will be removed from envelopes and the envelopes will be discarded before tallying votes.

If you do not wish to tear this page out of your newsletter you may photocopy this ballot.



IN MEMORIAM

Inadvertently, our "In Memoriam" list was dropped from the copy of the last newsletter. We apologize and list all of those who would have been listed in the last issue here along with our other shipmates who have left us since the last issue.

May God grant peace and comfort to the families of all of these good friends and shipmates.

LCI 5
Pascal Peters

LCI 321
John T. Clifford

LCI 450
Thomas Elmore

LCI 553
Roland C. Scott

LCI 12
James A. King

LCI 332
Pascal Peters

LCI 450
Nicholas J. Grasso

LCI 553
Forbes T. Milliken

LCI 26
Robert E. Dolan

LCI 338
Paul M. Markel

LCI 454
Floyd W. Jones

LCI 558
Thomas Silasen

LCI 30
Frank Greif

LCI 344
Hector Griswold

LCI 455
James R. Mitchell

LCI 559
Richard M. Payne

LCI 46
John J. McCarthy

LCI 348
Loren Brevick

LCI 456
CAPT Ronald C. Bogle

LCI 560
Edwin Campbell

LCI 64
John L. Jolinek

LCI 355
Edward C. Harms

LCI 456
June G. Gillman

LCI 561
Melvin Zolkover

LCI 67
Howard C. Wells

LCI 372
Kenneth R. Askelsen

LCI 457
Carl F. Canfield

LCI 561
Andrew Mihalik

LCI 77
Joe M. Chavez

LCI 396
Norman R. Fenimore

LCI 458
Carl J. Wenzinger

LCI 561
Frank Molder

LCI 86
Sewall Webster

LCI 397
Robert Austen

LCI 458
Russell D. Jardine

LCI 568
Captain Jack O'Neil

LCI 219
Edward Vargo

LCI 415
Edward A. Vargo

LCI 461
Floyd Van Horn

LCI 589
Charles E. Corriviau

LCI 222
George C. Randolph

LCI 439
Andrew M. Voytush

LCI 462
Jack Conlin

LCI 621
Bernard D. Craig

LCI 237
Joseph E. Callery

LCI 442
Frank B. Clark

LCI 464
Shelby D. Smith

LCI 630
Maxie R. Morris

LCI 632
Donald R. Carney

LCI 687
Sam J. Rizzo

LCI 790
Charles E. Summerville

LCI 1069
George S. Brush

LCI 638
Nicholas Campo

LCI 707
Leo A. Wise

LCI 872
James Abbott

LCI 1057
John Ferguson

LCI 655
James E. Van Gundy

LCI 708
Robert Gucker

LCI 944
Paul Raymond

LCI 1057
Donald Serfass

LCI 663
Adam E. Drapczuk

LCI 754
Kenneth J. Hahn

LCI 957
Ward E. Eardley

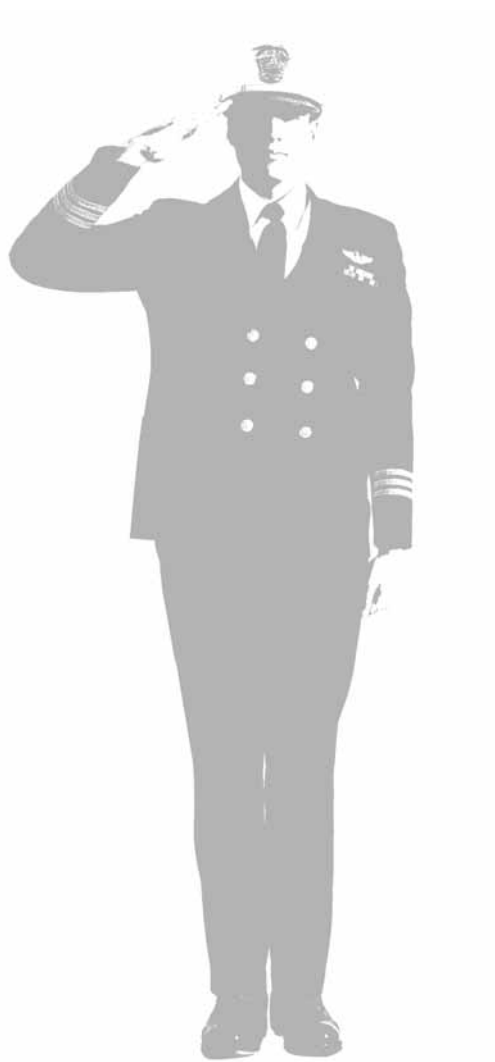
LCI 1067
Carl Sagmeister

LCI 663
William F. Eger

LCI 764
Joseph A. Panik

LCI 966
Francis J. Huether

LCI 1088
Paul D. Gildner



THE 713 GETS UNDERWAY AGAIN!

Opportunity for a Veteran's Day visit if you're in the Vancouver Area

Gordon Smith, President Of the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum reports that, as we go to press, LCI 713 is about to get underway again!

"We will be temporarily moving the 713 from Astoria back to the dock in Portland in front of the Double Tree Hotel were we had our 2004 national reunion," said Gordon

The move is planned for Saturday, September 9th. If all goes as planned she will be back in Portland before this issue of the newsletter reaches you. Gordon promises new pictures and information for the next issue of "Elsie Item".

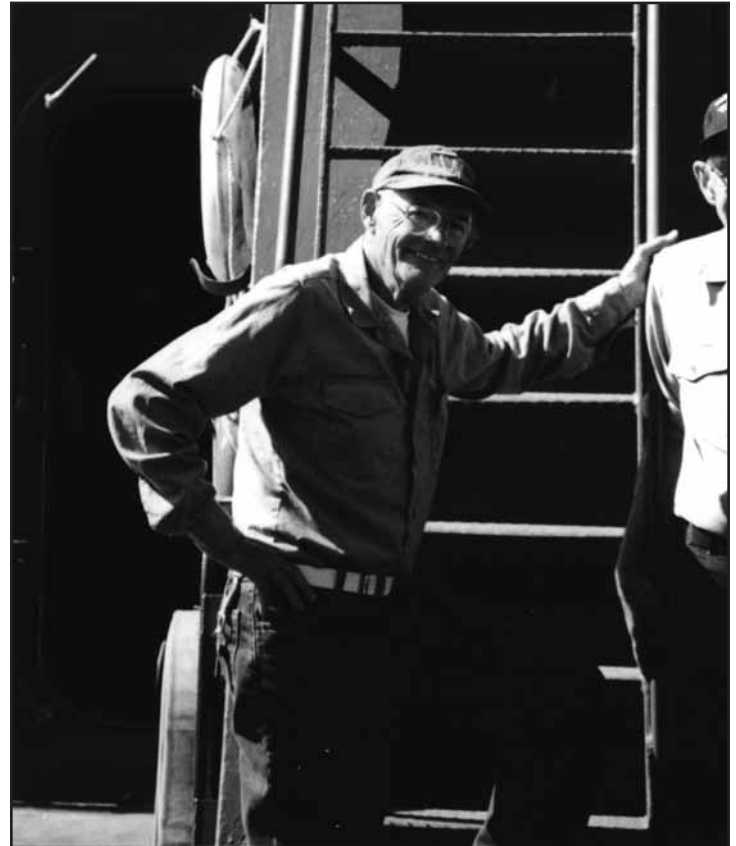
Additionally, there will be an opportunity to visit aboard the 713 if you happen to be in Vancouver on Veteran's Day, November 11, 2006. Plans are to bring the 713 to Vancouver where it will be tied up next to "The Quay", a hotel in Vancouver, just across the bridge from Portland. A new Hilton Hotel is just four blocks away, so if you are a member of the "Hilton Chain", you might want to plan a visit.

"We've made great headway in restoring the ship to its World War II appearance," said Gordon, "and we're sure LCIers will be very pleased with what they see".

LCI 713 will be on display as part of Vancouver's Veteran's Day celebrations which will include a parade, military vehicles and re-enactors in uniform.

Without engines at present, she was propelled by a small pushing tug boat.

A long-range goal of the Museum is to re-install engines.



"Welcome Aboard", says Gordon



LCI 713 cruises down the Columbia River following her appearance at the 2004 LCI National Reunion.



The Zudells—One Big, Happy LCI Family!



Ten members of the Zudell family gather round the table for the reunion banquet. Counterclockwise beginning in the immediate foreground: Martha Zudell, Bob Zudell, Ben Zudell, Alex Zudell, Christopher Dickey, Deborah Zudell Dickey, Sharon Zudell, John Zudell, Carolyn Wiedeman, Andrew Wiedeman



Bob Zudell greets his old Skipper, Ned Hedger, who commanded LCI 614. Ned was honored at the banquet for his long service as a Director of the LCI National Association

Bob and Martha Zudell, Westlake, Ohio, made the April reunion in Norfolk a very special time. Not only was it their thirteenth national reunion, but this time they had a total of ten family members there with them!

Three of their four children attended the reunion along with a daughter-in-law and four grandsons.

Daughter-in-law Sharon Zudell eloquently expressed the reason for this large family gathering at the LCI reunion:

”We brought the grandsons to the reunion so that they could see first-hand the group of men who sailed the seas during World War II at such young ages to defend their country.

”Three of these grandsons are almost the same age as their grandfather was when he first left home for the U. S. Navy. We hope this makes an impression on these young men and that they will understand that the veterans who served their country 60 years ago made the world a more stable place and provided the opportunities for the kind of lives these grandsons enjoy now”

Bob, who served on LCI 614 was especially happy to greet Ned Hedger, his old skipper, once again. The family were touched to hear Captain Hedger thank Bob for his loyal service and to hear Bob’s response that he’d always done his best for his commanding officer.





Radisson Hotel, Branson



*Veteran's Memorial Hall,
Radisson Hotel, Branson*



Mark your calendar! Get your Hotel Reservation in now!

It's Branson, Missouri, May 16-20, 2007 for the next national LCI Reunion

If only half of the good things everybody who has ever been to Branson says are right, LCIers are in for one of their best reunions ever when we meet there for our national reunion May 16-20, 2007

And if you still have doubts about what a great place we are going to, just grab your September/October issue of The AARP Magazine and read "Bright Lights, Little City", the story of how Branson became the entertainment choice of millions of people - especially those of our generation and even more especially of Veterans.

"When people think of Branson", says Bill Newgate, the author of the AARP article, "they share a precise expectation: wholesome entertainment, celebrities they consider friends - Andy Williams, Debbie Reynolds, Neil Sedaka, Roy "Dusty" Rogers - and, most important, fellow visitors who are a lot like them."

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. with our input, will be planning the specifics of our reunion. There's lots to choose from, but whichever shows we attend, one thing is certain: you will be recognized for your military service.

"In all Branson shows", says Newgate, "there's a heart-felt tribute to those serving in the military."

We wanted to be sure you had plenty of time to plan for this reunion so asked that hotel reservation information be provided to us in time for this issue. Take advantage of the form on the next page and make sure you have your hotel room reserved. Our hotel is:

**THE RADISSON HOTEL BRANSON
BRANSON, MO
417-335-5767 or 888-566-5290**

The Radisson Hotel is located at 120 South Wildwood Drive, Branson, MO 65616. The hotel is located in the heart of the theater district next to the theaters of Andy Williams and Bobby Vinton, and the Grand Palace Theaters. If you are driving, please call the hotel at (417) 335-5767 for accurate driving instructions. The Radisson Hotel features ten stories of beautifully decorated guest rooms, each equipped with a coffee maker, hair dryers, iron and ironing board, electronic key access, clock radios, and in-room voice mail. The Hotel also features an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, hot tub, sauna, and exercise room.

Handicapped and non-smoking rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special requests when making your hotel reservation. There is ample free parking available. Check-in time is 3pm and check-out is 12 noon. Mike Radford's *Remember When Veteran's Café* offers one of the area's best breakfast buffets and delicious luncheon specials. They also serve dinner. *The Canteen*, is a coffee shop featuring soups, salads, and sandwiches as well as espresso, flavored coffees, and fruit smoothies. *R & R Bar*, serves your favorite cocktail, beer, or wine in a warm, friendly atmosphere that is uniquely Branson. Full menu service is also available in the *R & R Bar*. Room service is available.

Three airlines (American, Northwest, and United) service the Springfield Branson Regional Airport. Classic Shuttle Service is an independent shuttle service in Branson offering veteran discounts. Please call 417-598-0227 to make your reservations. The current fare is \$50 for one person, \$65 total for 2 people, \$80 total for 3 people, \$25 each for a party of 4-10 people. Airport Shuttle, offers service to and from the air-



port, current fare is \$50 for one person, \$75 total for 2 people, and please call for other rates. Please call 417-339-3420 to make your reservations, ask to speak with Kim. Reservations need to be made twenty-four hours in advance for both shuttle services.

The Radisson Hotel does allow RV's to park in the hotel parking lot for guests staying in the hotel. Should hookups be required, call Chastain's RV Park, 397 Animal Safari Road, Branson, MO 65616, at 1-800-467-7611 for information, reservations, and directions. The RV Park is approximately one mile from the Hotel.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair for the reunion, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheel chairs by the day and week. Please call their toll free number at (888) 441-7575 for details. All prices quoted include delivery fees.

Vendors, Schedules, and Prices are subject to change.

----- CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL -----

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION REUNION—HOTEL RESERVATION FORM
REUNION DATES: MAY 16–20, 2007

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

TEL. # (_____) _____ FAX # (_____) _____

ARRIVAL DAY & DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____ # NIGHTS _____

OF ROOMS ____ # OF PEOPLE IN RM. ____ HANDICAP ACCESS ____ SMOKING ____ NONSMOKING ____

BED PREFERENCE: KING BED ____ 2 DOUBLE BEDS ____

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

RATE: \$82 + state and local tax (currently 11.6%). Reservations must be guaranteed by credit card (information below) or first night's deposit enclosed.

CUTOFF DATE: 4/13/07. Reservations received after this date will be processed on space & rate availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled by 6pm on day of arrival. Attendee will be charged for one night's stay if cancellation is made after 6pm on expected day of arrival. Adjustments to departure date after check-in, resulting in a shortened length of stay, will result in an assessment.

RESERVATION BY PHONE: 888-566-5290. Please inform the hotel that your reservation should be under the USS LCI National Association Reunion group rates.

PAYMENT METHOD:

___AMEX ___DINERS ___VISA ___MASTER CARD ___CARTE BLANCHE ___DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

Mail to:
Radisson Hotel
120 South Wildwood Drive
Branson, MO 65616
Attn: Reservations



Baseball at Anzio!

Remember Anzio? That long, drawn-out battle on the coast of Italy where the Germans did everything they could to throw the American invaders back into the sea? It was all of that, but for young Ken Stern, skipper of LCI 41 it also meant Baseball!

Ken, now living in Los Angeles, sent us this picture of the baseball team from LCI 41 to prove that the crew of which he was - and is - so proud could do something more than just prevail against difficulty and stiff opposition as they landed troops again and again in the North African, Sicilian and Italian campaigns.

Ken doesn't say so, but it's a pretty good bet that this baseball team took the field a bit after the stubborn Germans let up on their incessant shelling of the beleaguered beachhead.



The baseball team of LCI 41! Left to right, kneeling, first row: Ken Stern, Ray Martin, Otis Bailey, Walter Kijec and Ed Dissen. In the middle, just behind Ray Martin is John Kasonic. Back row, standing, left to right: George Hoffman, Bob LeBlanc, Fred Schmidt, Roy Merrit and (first name unknown) Strassburg.

Thanks, Ken, for sharing this with us!

REUNIONS! REUNIONS! REUNIONS!

From California to Florida, LClers are getting together or are deep into plans for future state reunions..

It's a pleasure to report on the good meetings that have been held and those that are in the offing. These reunions are a direct outcome of the good work Hal Bleyhl and Rod Scurlock have put into helping State Directors get organized in their areas. We owe them our thanks for their good work.

Another Great California Reunion

Jim McCarthy once again organized and carried off a great California reunion. Eighty LClers representing 21 different LCIs met in Eureka, California, on August 7-9, 2006, for an evening of hospitality, and, on the next day they shared in a buffet breakfast, tours of the LCI(L) 1091 and a reunion dinner.



The 1091 let the bunting fly to welcome LClers aboard

Vice President Rod Scurlock was the speaker for the banquet. at which time he presented Jim McCarthy with a plaque recognizing him as "State Director of the Year". A plaque was also presented to "Doc" Davis and to his wife Bobbie Jo for their efforts in saving the 1091 and presenting it to the Humbolt Bay Naval Air and Sea Museum where plans are underway to restore it to its World War II appearance.

Those at the banquet also heard from Gordon Smith who reported on the status of the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum where the 713 is now located. Leroy Marsh described the work being done at the Humbolt Bay Naval Air and Sea Museum.



Vice President Rod Scurlock presents the "State Director of the Year" award to Jim McCarthy



Indiana LCIers Hold First Reunion



Seated, left to right: R. Harry Hudlow, LCI 46; Bob Morrow, LCI 699; Francis Fleming, LCI 417 ; Bernard Michaels, LCI 545; Norman Parrott, LCI 801 Standing (left to right): Keith Cooper, LCI 351; Archie Krout, LCI 19; Bob Klug, LCI 540; Ken Vinton, LCI 46; Harry Elliott, LCIs 70, 621 and 528; Wilbur Webb, LCI 867; Joe Harris, LCI 600; Jo Di Girolamo, LCI 654. Present but not in the picture, Jim Ransom, LCI 41.

Indiana State Director Keith Cooper reports on a successful first reunion for LCIers living in the “Hoosier” state. The reunion was held August 26, 2006, at the Best Western Lafayette Executive Plaza in Lafayette, Indiana.

An informal time of visiting, renewing acquaintances and swapping sea stories was enjoyed by all. The LCIers also enjoyed hearing an informative presentation by the Veteran's Service Officer for Indiana on available veteran's benefits. Jim Ransom was able to get a full page article along with a picture of an LCI in the local newspaper.

The proverbial “good time was had by all”. So much so, that the Indiana LCIers voted unanimously to get together again next year. Keith Cooper is planning an even bigger and better reunion for then.

Michigan Shipmates Meet in Traverse City

Del James, organizer of the Michigan reunion, September 12-14, 2006, writes:

“We had a wonderful time at our 2006 LCI reunion in Traverse City in beautiful Northern Michigan. There were great sights, good food, lots of casinos and outstanding entertainment. In a word, Del James and his great crew did a super job putting it all together.”

Del has accepted the title of Michigan State Director as of the date of the reunion. He replaces John Urquhart who is moving to North Carolina.

The Great Northwest Gets Together Again!

Thirty-five LCIers living in the northwestern corner of the United States got together on September 12-13, 2006, in Couer d'Alene, ID, for a reunion planned by National Director Gordon Smith.



Northwest LCIers at Post Falls, ID Seated (left to right) LeRoy Olson, Charles Ports, Mel Heyntsen, Gordon Smith. Standing (left to right) Clyde Allen, Dave McKay, Rick Holmes, Al Pipes, Bob Ascherl, Hal Blehyl, Rod Scurlock, George Emehorn and David McKay)



A tour of a silver mine in Wallace, Idaho, was on the agenda for Tuesday, the first day of the reunion. Wednesday the LClers took to the water for a tour of the 23-mile long lake which is one of the great tourist attractions in the area.

The reunion was capped off by a grand banquet dinner. Gordon Smith, President of the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum, reported on the recent move the 713 to Portland for viewing during celebrations surrounding Veteran's Day. (See article on this elsewhere in this newsletter.) Gordon told the LClers and their wives that plans are being made for a new hull and engines for the 713 which would make it an operating ship again.

A contact with a local reporter resulted in a lengthy article in the local paper, featuring pictures and stories of the LClers. Good use was made of the excellent photos contained in the new 2007 LCI Calendar for the article.

All in all, it was a great reunion in a beautiful place and the LClers are looking forward to next year when they can repeat this enjoyable experience.

A Late Report from Ohio...

The Ohio State Reunion was held September 18-19 in Columbus, Ohio. Just as we are going to press we received this report from Jim Aydelotte, State Director for Ohio:

Just got back from Ohio and it was a wonderful trip. We had a good time. 35 people attended and it was great. We now have 55 plus members and getting stronger. I have people who make phone calls to other members and also try for new members. It has worked for us. We will have the 4th reunion at the same place in September 2007. It was great because another navy outfit was there the USS IZORD a destroyer group and they plan to be there next year, as they has such a good time with us. There were about 30 in their group. I hope other groups are having the success that we are having. See you in Branson.

...and at least one reunion yet to come!!

Florida LClers to Meet at Cocoa Beach in January

Connie Mulherin, State Director for Florida, has announced plans for a reunion at the Hilton Beach Oceanfront, Cocoa Beach, FL, for January 14-16, 2007.

With a beautiful beach-front location next door to the launch platforms of the Kennedy Space Center, the hotel promises to be a popular reunion site for the large number of LClers living in Florida as well as for all "Snow Birds" who may be in the area.

Hotel reservations can be made by contacting the Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront hotel by phone, or by regular mail. The mailing address is 1550 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach, FL 31931. The telephone numbers for the hotel are 321-799-0003 and 1-800-445-8667. When making reservations, be sure to specify GROUP CODE: LCI NAVY.

A special room rate of \$109 per day has been obtained. This rate is good for three days before and three days after the reunion.

For further information and registration materials, contact Connie Mulherin at 1520 Sea Gull Drive, Titusville, FL 32796-3776, Connie's telephone number is 321-268-1713 and his email address is cmlherin1@cfl.rr.com



An Appeal to our Life Members

Gentlemen, we need your help!

By becoming a Life Member, you've already demonstrated your loyalty to your LCI Shipmates and the value you place on being a member of our Association. We want you to know that your solid support in the past is genuinely appreciated. We have learned to count on you and we do so now in putting this request before you.

You've read elsewhere in this issue of the sad news of Tiny Clarkson's health. There's an immediate need to give him and his faithful wife Janet relief from their Treasurer duties. Search is underway for a member who may be able to take over, but this could be a lengthy process, so, in the meantime, your Board of Directors has approved my suggestion that we contract with an outside professional firm, Nehemiah Communications, located in Columbia, SC, to do the work. If we are to do this, we need additional financial resources.

The Board of Directors has therefore authorized me to make an appeal to our Life Members for a one time donation of \$25.00.

Now, it's not easy to ask shipmates - special friends - for money, but we think it's what we need to do at this time. More than a few of you have come up to me in the past and said something like, "If you need more funds to keep the Association going, let me know".

It's not as though we're going to collapse tomorrow if we don't receive your gift. We'll hang on and make this thing work for a good while longer whatever, but it surely would be a great help and a great encouragement to all of us if you could stand along side us at this time and help us with your donation.

Can we count on you?

Please send your check to me made out to USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION and write on it "Life Member Donation". It will be our pleasure to acknowledge your contribution in a future issue of the newsletter. Also, we will be happy to send you a letter of acknowledgement so that you can claim your donation as a deduction on your income tax.

Finally, to encourage you and me too—I've just received a \$50.00 donation from a Life Member who's also a Board Member! That's a great start

My address:

John Cummer
302 Pinewood Cottage Lane
Blythewood, SC 29016

Thanks very much for considering this!



An LCIer Finds a Long Lost Friend!

It was a long shot at best

But for Connie Mulherin, who served as a Gunner's Mate in LCI(G) 561, it was hard to put away the scrap of paper with four scrawled signatures on it. The names were of four young Filipino boys he met over sixty years ago after his gunboat had participated in the Lingayen Gulf landings. Connie, who has a passion about saving reminders of his World War II service, couldn't stop wondering about what happened to those four young boys. He did something about it with surprising and gratifying results.

Here's Connie's story in his own words

After narrowly escaping being sunk by Japanese suicide boats, we returned to Leyte Bay and remained there for two months during which time we learned much about the wonderful people of the Philippines. There were occasional air raids; but, in general, things were quite calm.

The crew was granted passes every other day and we developed a taxi service with the natives in outrigger canoes. They would bring men back from yesterday's liberty party each morning and then deliver today's group to the villages on Leyte's sister island, Samar, which was located on the opposite side of the bay. We even slept on the floor in the villagers' huts and were very warmly received. I could hear our hosts, all of whom were devout Catholics, praying in the next room. At times, I heard them using the words, "God bless the Americanos".

As someone who was always seeking to learn more about these island people, I found myself inside a tiny school room one afternoon along with several of my shipmates. The instructor allowed us to speak with some of the students, and I had four of them sign a scrap of paper for me. Their names were Pastor Torbelus, Pacifico Torbelus, Rizal Alexander and a fourth boy whose signature was illegible. Another teen age boy named Brulo seemed to be a leader among the older boys and he was most helpful to us in anything we asked.

Our liberty party organized a game of tackle football in the school yard. It was something they had never seen! We were acting pretty crazy, of course, with no helmets or pads; but no one was hurt and the entire town turned out to watch.

In the years that have gone by, I had often wondered about those young boys who signed that scrap of paper. I wondered if they thought of us as fondly as I remembered them.

Then, recently, I decided to take a long chance and see if there was any way I could find out about those boys. I knew that they now would be elderly men, maybe even passed away; but I felt I had to try.

I'd spent most of my working life after leaving the Navy working in the post office and it occurred to me that it might just be possible to attempt a contact with these four boys, now grown men, through a post office. So I took that slim chance and risked a postage stamp and a piece of paper on a letter to the Postmaster at Malabut on Samar Island. I described our contact with the boys way back in 1945. I wrote of that day we met the boys and played football. I gave him the names of the four I was hoping to contact and asked:



“Might you have any knowledge of these names? I realize they would be elderly men by now, like myself, but I wonder if they recall that day as fondly as I do.”

That letter was mailed in February of 2006. It was my great fortune that my letter reached a compassionate post master who went to the trouble of searching for my four friends from so long ago. To my great surprise and pleasure it was only a few weeks before a letter came back from one of those old friends. It was Pastor Torbeles. He wrote:

Dear Connie Mulherin,

Hello! How are you and your family? For us here in the province of Samar and our country Philippines it is fine as usual. The only change is I am getting older than usual. I'm already nearing 73 year of age with 8 healthy grown children. My 7 children are already married and they have their own homes, living with their families. I have to tell you that I could not measure the happiness I had when the postmaster handed me your address and showed me our own signatories, justifying our identities. My friend, I am very much proud of your loyalty and kindness to us. The very long distance from your country to my country makes it far beyond my expectation that you would remember us.

A million thanks for all your thoughts with which you remember us. All the other signatories have passed away. . . more thoughts will be coming your way and more information about my family and my country will follow.

May God bless us all!

PS. Enclosed is a photocopy of my senior citizen's ID card

Respectfully yours,

Pastor Torbeles

And so it came about that, through the thoughtfulness of a postmaster in the Philippine Islands, who took the time and made the effort to track down Pastor, I was able to make contact once again with my young friend of over sixty years ago.

What a rewarding experience!



A History of LCI Flotilla 22

By
Jim Talbert
LCI 618

Jim Talbert, Chairman of the Board of the USS LCI National Association, served as Communications Supervisor on the staff of the Commander of Flotilla 22. Because there were so many LCIs involved with this flotilla, Jim thought there were be a good many of you who would find his account of interest. We're grateful to Jim for sharing this with us

Is your ship listed here? If so, then this is part of your history.

Ship No. 62 - 63 - 328 - 333 - 334 - 335 - 357 - 358 - 359 - 360 - 433 - 434 - 435 - 436 - 443 - 444 - 445 - 446 - 518 - 519 - 614 - 615 - 616 - 617 - 618 - 619 - 688 - 689 - 690 - 776 - 777 - 985 - 986 - 987 - 1032 - 1033.

The first 19 of these ships were from the old Flotilla 5. The first flagship was the 433 under the command of Commander Mc D. Smith, then the 618 under the command of Commander Marion M. Byrd and finally the 690 under the command of Commander Philip Porter.

Our ships were the smallest sea worthy ships of WWII. They had a Hull length of 158 feet, a width of 24 feet and a draft of 4 feet forward and 6 feet aft. They had a cruising range of 4000 miles at a standard speed of 12 knots.

The basic purpose of this small ship was to carry infantry troops for a short distance and land them on hostile beaches all over the world. Each Ship could carry a maximum of a company of 200 fully armed combat ready troops.

However, some of these small ships were converted to do other tasks. Some were converted to

gun ships, that carried 3 - 40mm single mount guns and 4 - 20mm single mount guns. Others were converted to rocket ships that could fire 504 - 4.5 " rockets at a range of 1000 yards. Still others were converted to mortar firing ships. These conversions were made to support the landing of the Infantry. Flotilla 22 was made up of 36 of these small ships, with 3 Groups of 12 each. They were designated as Groups 64, 65 and 66.

Flotilla 22 Staff, for most of WWII was billeted aboard the USS LCI 618(FF). The flotilla was formed in early August, 1944, and was commanded by Commander McD Smith, as a spin off of old Flotilla 5, which was broken up.

For the first month of operation we were assigned to transporting troops and supplies of the 6th US Army for reinforcement in and around Finschhafen, Aitape and Biak Island and the New Guinea area. However, on September 16th we got our first taste of what it was all about with the invasion of Morotai Island just west of New Guinea.

The LCI Unit of Task Group 77.4 comprised of LCI's 433(Flag), 435, 360, 446, 519, 334, 445, 444, 359, 357, 443, 63, 328, 333, 436, 335, 447, 429, 364 and 62.

The convoy proceeded, without incident, west to Morotai Island. At 0532 when the Task Group had reached a point just south of the southern tip of Morotai Island, orders were received by radio from the Task Group Commander in U.S.S. Nicholas (DD 449) directing the LCI's to leave the convoy and proceed independently.

At 0540 antiaircraft fire was observed coming from shore installations on the Dehegila Peninsula and smoke was seen rising from the



area of firing. As the LCI's passed between Mitita Island and Dehegila Peninsula, the U.S.S. PC1133 assumed station as escort; and, in reply to a radio message received as to where the LCI's were to beach, signaled to Command "Follow Me To White Beach." Forming a column behind the Flag Ship, we reached the approach lane at 0642.

Under a lot of pressure from enemy planes and our own nearby fighting, we were also taking fire from shore batteries. We proceeded to White Beach; however, we were instructed by the Beachmaster of Red Beach to await an officer to show us the way, as White Beach was not marked. This Officer never did show up, so we were told to "do the best you can."

We got about 50 yards from the beach and ran into a reef. None of the LCI's could get any closer, so we were ordered to unload anyway. Here you have to use your imagination as to what happened,

While the troops were being unloaded in water almost over their head, we received a radio message from the Beachmaster asking why we were not unloading at the "NEW White Beach."

At this point, needless to say, Flotilla 22 Commander .Commander McD Smith, was fit to be tied, and "remarked" that the Beachmaster was not up to date as to what was going on.

Because of the shallowness of the water, LCIs 519 and 444 were stranded on the reefs and had to remain behind. The 357 was ordered to stay behind with the two stranded ships and render any assistance it could, and return later with another convoy. This was done with the permission of the Task Force Commander.

After putting all the troops ashore we were ordered to return to Hollandia, New Guinea, where we remained for the next few months. In late September we had a change of Command of Flotilla 22. Commander M. M. Byrde assumed command of the Flotilla.

We also received a number of new ships from the States. They were LCIs 985, 986, 987, 688, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618 and 619. The Flag was transferred from the 433 to the 618. It was a new ship just out from the states and it had all the latest equipment and it was designed to be a Flag Ship. It had the latest radar and radio equipment and the troop compartments were all configured into offices. I had two radio "shacks", eight radiomen and six radarmen.

The months of October, November and December of 1944 were spent doing odd jobs such as supplying troops and general supplies to the different combat areas in the region. On Christmas Day, 1944, we left Hollandia and joined a convoy of several hundred ships, at Attape New Guinea.

We all new this was the big one; we were going to the Philippines!

We arrived at Leyte on January 3, 1945, and joined another group of ships even larger than the one we were in. This convoy was known as Task Force 78, assigned to invade the Island of Luzon at Lingayen Gulf.

The convoy then proceeded through the Surigao Straits where we were attacked daily by aircraft and midget submarines. One Japanese plane came so close along our Starboard side we could see the pilot saluting as he went by and crashed into an LST just behind us. Later the subs were reported as sunk by our escort, and the planes were either shot down or chased away.

On the night of January 7th, while passing just west of Manila Bay, there was a running gun battle with an enemy destroyer and some of our escort ships. Many of the enemy ships were sunk. On January 9th, we arrived and commenced the invasion of Lingayen Gulf. After the unloading of troops and supplies, our LCIs were assigned to the outer edge of the gulf and were ordered to make smoke each morning and evening to cover the entire gulf and to hide all the ships present.



After several days of dodging enemy suicide boats and enemy bombers, things got a little better. We had sent some of our LCI gunboats up the Lingayen River to seek out enemy suicide boats and destroy anything they could find. I can remember going up river with Commander Byrd on one of these gunboats. We were so close to the shore that you could hear the small arms bullets bouncing off the outside of the ship. The word was passed over the intercom to stay below decks.. Then you could hear our guns open up and in a few minutes we could go out on deck again.

We came to a large opening in the river and there must have been about 50 of these odd looking boats. They were just plywood in the shape of a V with no back on the seat. Some of them had a 1937 Chevy engine and the front end was loaded with TNT. One of the ships had some Army Engineers aboard who destroyed all the boats.

Since I was on Staff and was the communications supervisor, I was privileged to be “in on the know” of things that the rest of the crew were not privy to.

On January 28th, some of the Staff went aboard the 519 and proceeded in convoy up the coast, about 50 miles behind enemy lines, to supply the guerilla forces in that area and to pick up the wife and family of the President of the Philippines and take them out of harms way back to Dagupan. With Mrs. Osmena were five other members of the family, nine servants and two infants. Also with the party were Col. R.W. Volkmann, USAFIP, and Capt. Nebres Blenuenido D. PA Chief Surgeon USAFIP. Several wounded guerilla fighters, and several Japanese prisoners of war were also taken aboard.

After this some of our LCI's were assigned to supply the guerilla forces in the north on a regular basis. Some of our ships were assigned to river-boat patrol on a regular schedule, flushing out enemy suicide boats up the Lingayen River and destroying them.

On February 21st, Commander Flotilla 22 in 618 with 433, 518, and 690 proceeded to Subic Bay, Luzon, escorting 60 LCM's, 20 LCVP's and “J” boats of the 594th Engineer Special Brigade, 3 Army Tug Boats and 10 LCT's,. There we established our base of operations.

On March 1st 1945, Commander Flotilla 22 in 618 with LCIs 518, 63 and 714 of Flotilla 24, the 593 into Manila Bay Commander Flotilla 22 was SOPA (Senior Officer Present Afloat). USS Day (DE225) and the USS JOY, escorted 12 Liberty Ships and LST's 932, 592 and This was the first Allied merchant shipping in Manila Bay since 1941.

Using Subic Bay as our base of operations, we conducted 22 other hostile combat landings throughout the Philippines. Here are just a few:

-April 1st, Legaspi; April 17th, Parang Mindanao, where we landed the 24th Infantry Division; May 11th, Zamboanga; May 13th, Basilan

There were many others in the Mindanao, Mindoro and Panay area. Polloc Harbor was my first chance to observe just how much destruction our LCI rocket ships could cause. They completely destroyed a beautiful beach and everything in, for five hundred yards in from the shoreline.

From then on, it was just a matter of moving troops around and supplying them.

On August 15th, we received word that President Truman had ordered the cessation of offensive action, because the Japanese were about to surrender. It was suicide to go out on deck that night, because of the gunfire from the fleet being shot up in the air and the shrapnel raining down on us from the celebration.

Commander Flotilla Twenty Two reported to Commander Philippine Sea Frontier for Operational Control. After this, the Flotilla began to break up. The 614, 616 and the 985 were assigned to Commander Minesweeping and



Survey Group of the North China Forces. The 433, 434, 435, 436, 518, 519, 445, 446, 776, 777, 1032 and 1033 were assigned to Commander Yangtze Patrol Force. The 63, 333, 334, 335, 357, 358, 360, 443 and 444 were assigned to Commander Philippine Sea Frontier. The 62 and 328 were assigned to Commander Service Force.

On 2 September 1945, the rest of Flotilla 22 left Subic Bay enroute to Leyte to join a convoy and proceeded north to Okinawa, arriving at 1430 on 13 September 1945.

On September 16th, after two days in Okinawa, the convoy left for Jensen, Korea, as part of the Occupation Forces. On the first day of this trip, the convoy encountered a severe typhoon, complete with 50-foot seas and winds of 70 to 90 knots. All ships weathered the storm, even though we were blown within about 20 miles of the China Coast. We were six days late in arriving at Jensen, Korea, on September 21st.

On September 26th the convoy sailed for Taku Bar, China, where four days later the 3rd Marine Amphibious Corps was disembarked in an initial occupational landing. We proceeded 36 miles up the river to the city of Tientsin with the Seventh Amphibious Force. We were the first of the

American Navy in this Chinese section since the Japanese occupation.

On October 10th we returned to Jensen, Korea, at which time Commander M.M. Byrde was transferred from the Staff to the USS Seminole AK104. The Flag was transferred from the 618 to the 690 under the Command of Commander Philip Porter.

In December, Flotilla 22 departed for the States where it was decommissioned in January 1946.

I would like to say that of all the time I spent in the Navy, my life with the LCI's was my best. We take a lot of ribbing from the "Big Ship" sailors, but while they were setting offshore throwing big shells at the beaches, we were approaching those beaches and had to get down and dirty and fight the real war. I'm proud to have been a part of it.

J.E. "Jim" Talbert
Chairman of the Board
USS LCI National Association

Wear your LCI Cap—A Good Recruiting Tool!

Hal Bleyhl reports that at the recent Northwest Reunion, one member shared something that could be a good recruiting tool for new members that we all could use:

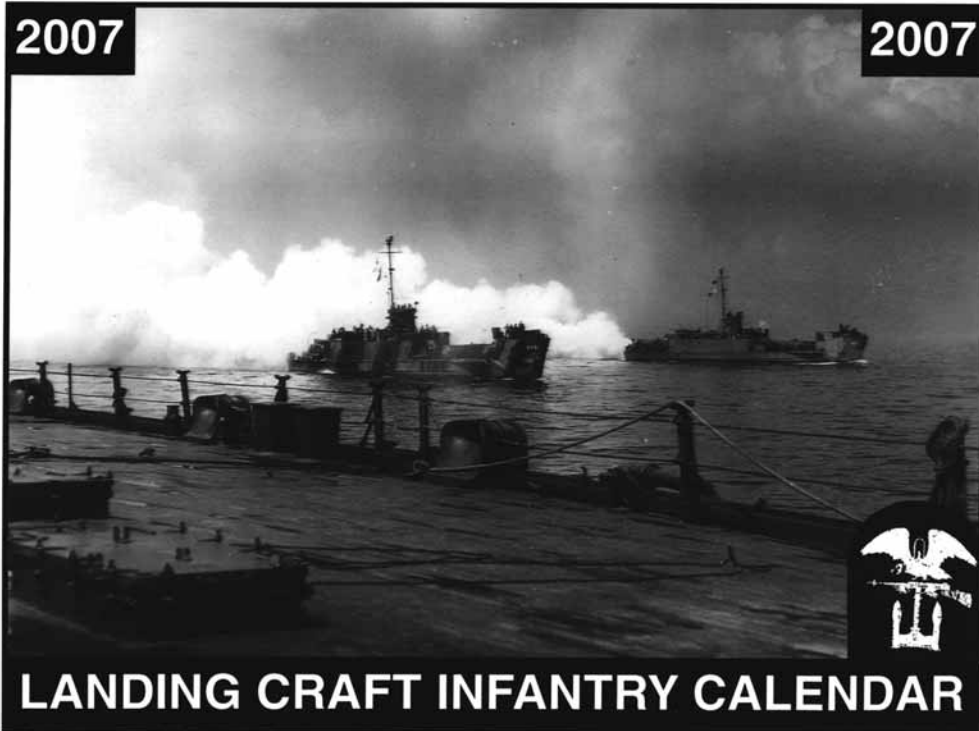
The member said that he wears his LCI cap which often starts a conversation. From these conversations he has already had one new chap to join the our Association.

Hal comments: "I know there were 70,000 who went thru Solomons, Maryland and if 20% are still alive, that makes 14,000 out there some where. I think I will wear my cap every where I go. Now if all 2,000 of us did this, would that not be something!"

Let's wear those caps!



2007 Calendar Now Available!



The front cover picture of the 2007 LCI calendar shows LCIs moving past the USS Pennsylvania, laying smoke to protect ships making the landing on the southern beaches in Leyte Gulf. Other illustrations have to do with the Guam landing, the shellback initiation on the LCI(L) 759, the LCI(L) 713 at her museum moorage in Astoria, the Hollandia landing, the Biak landing, the Omaha Beach landing, th Balikpapan landing, bumboats in the Philippines, the Morotai landing, the Okinawa landing, the LCI(L) 1091 moored in Eureka, California, the Ormoc Bay landing, and rocket ships going in to make a rocket assault on the beach at Okinawa. Dates of all WWII land-

ings, major naval sea battles, and ship losses are printed on the calendar dates on which they occurred. One page is used to discuss the wha and whys of LCIs and the histories of the 1091 and the 713. Another page is a condensed account of the 7th Amphibious Force LCIs and their 56 landings in the Pacific. Essentially, the calendar is an amphibious landing history of WWII. The calendars sell for \$6.00 each, which includes tax, shipping and handling. (Also, while they last, sets of the calendars for 2002, 03, 04, 05, 06 and 07 will be available for \$25.00.)

2007 LCI CALENDAR ORDER FORM

Send orders to : J. E. McCarthy
 249 Idlewilld Lane
 Oceanside, CA 92054-5418
 Telephone: (760) 439-5418

Calendars are \$6.00 each (including tax, mailing and handling) No. _____

Package of 2002, 03, 04, 05, 06 and 07 calendars available at \$25.00. No. of packages _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

SHIP TO:

Name _____ LCI # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Another Stern Winch Story!

By

Ralph E. Gallant,
LCI (G) 346

The Navy obviously meant the stern winch on an LCI to be used for pulling the ship off the beach after a landing, but LCIs found other ways to make use of that powerful machine and some of them sound like going hunting for rabbits with an elephant gun! They are still wondrously amusing and evocative of some of the weird ways we found to entertain ourselves!

Inspired by John Cox's account of how they used the stern winch on LCI 551 to turn an ice cream freezer, Ralph Gallant, now a resident of Oregon City, Oregon, sent in this account of another ingenious use for that powerful engine.

Maybe we ought to start a contest for the wildest story about non-official uses made of the stern winch!

The stern winch—a powered washing machine!

Like John W. Cox of LCI 551 who told how they used their stern winch to make ice cream, we made use of ours in getting our clothes properly washed!

As we had no washing machine aboard at this time, all our washings were done in a bucket and the best spot for doing so was on the fantail. Maybe that's why some of our crew members were called "Bucket Butt Sailors."

One day, sitting on a bucket with John E. Birkes, MoMM3C, griping about no washing machine, the idea struck us: There sits a perfectly good winch with the winch heads turning slowly. (Now, we can't use the name we really called those winch heads in polite company, but many of you will probably remember what that was).

We had it in that slow turn for normal warm up and for checking operation of the equipment. There it was - turning and doing nothing. Now, you remember these winch heads were used to winch our vessel in to the pier by throwing a turn or two around them with the mooring line. and the more turns you laid on, the more pull you had.

Well, as a gunboat, we had several empty 40mm cans with lock tops. We thought: if we drill four holes in the 40mm can cover and four in the same position on the winch head and attach the ammo can to the winch head with a rubber gasket between the two, all we have to do is stop the winch with the can in the upright position, pour in water, soap and the dirty clothes, lock the ammo can top back on, engage the winch to drive the heads at a slow turn and there you have it! After several minutes, with the dirty clothes flopping back and forth in the can, all we had to do was to remove the clothes, rinse them, and lay them out to dry or, better still, hang them out in the engine room for drying.

It sure saved all that arm motion using a toilet plunger, which was our old method! Also, it gave us a lot more time to talk about the important things in life like girls, home, girls, etc.

Well, the word about our stern winch powered washing machine spread throughout the ship, but we insisted that the Engineering Department have first use. We had one Lieutenant, Junior Grade, John Paul Lockard and 19 white hats in the Engineering Department.

But then one day we had an even better idea!

We had been sent from Okinawa to Leyte, Philippines. We were tied up alongside a pier, which was kind of unusual for us but it was only for a short stay. Our skipper was informed that, due to the need for other ships to use the pier, we could only spend the night alongside the pier and would have to be gone early the next morning.



So, being the ingenious and curious sailors that we were, always on the lookout for ways to improve our life, we decided to investigate everything on the pier. It came to our attention that the Navy had left a brand-new washing machine out on the end of the pier with no unit address.

Since we were a vessel that always did as it was told, next morning we were gone just as ordered and, lo and behold, there was a new washing machine aboard that needed to be installed!

Being real sailors, we set to work securing the washing machine to the deck and called in the electrician's mate to connect the power. Then, with the water line hooked up, we were ready for a test run. With dirty clothes, soap and water we were ready for business!

The Black Gang, more formally called the Engineering Department, were first in line for the new washing machine. Our old 40mm ammo can was removed from the winch head and placed into retirement. To make sure nothing happened to our new washing machine (which had somehow or other acquired a coat of very old

looking paint), the Bosn's Mate made a canvas cover, also painted with the very old looking paint, to conceal our treasure from prying eyes.

This faithful machine served our crew for the rest of the war. When some curious officer asked about the washing machine, the answer was always, "Yep, Washer was on here when I reported aboard!"

When we finally returned stateside and were decommissioning in New Orleans, the Supply Officer, in checking our Title "A" material, could find no mention or record of a washing machine, let along a serial number for the unit. What happened was that, like most gear with no numbers on the books, the washing machine was removed and deep-sixed. Sad to say, the Supply Officer would not let us take it with us to our next assignment!

Yep, we were small, but mighty, these LCIs!



A Great Tribute to the Flag from a Great Sailor!

At the recent California reunion, the Pledge of Allegiance and a "Toast to the Flag" were led by Captain K. C. O'Brien, United States Merchant Marine. Captain O'Brien has a rather unusual relationship with LCIs. As a young boy, he was dressed in a miniature Chief's uniform to accompany his mother as she dedicated USS LCI 63!

The "Toast to the Flag", by John J. Daly, was so impressive that we wanted to share it with you here:

Here's to the red of it - there's not a thread of it,
No, not a shred of it, in all the spread of it, from head to foot
But heroes bled for it, faced steel and lead for it,
Precious blood shed for it,
Bathing it Red!

Here's to the white of it - thrilled by the sight of it,
Who knows the right of it, but feels the might of it through day and
night.
Womanhood's care for it; Made Manhood dare for it,
Purity's prayer for it,
Keep it so White!

Here's to the blue of it, beautiful view of it,
Heavenly hue of it, Star-spangled dew of it.
Constant and true.
Diadem gleam for it, States stand supreme for it,
Liberty's beam for it,
Brightens the Blue!

Here's to the whole of it, Stars, stripes and pole of it,
Body and soul of it, Oh, and the roll of it, Sun shining through!
Heart's in accord with it, Swear by the sword for it,
Thanking the Lord for it,
Red, White and Blue!

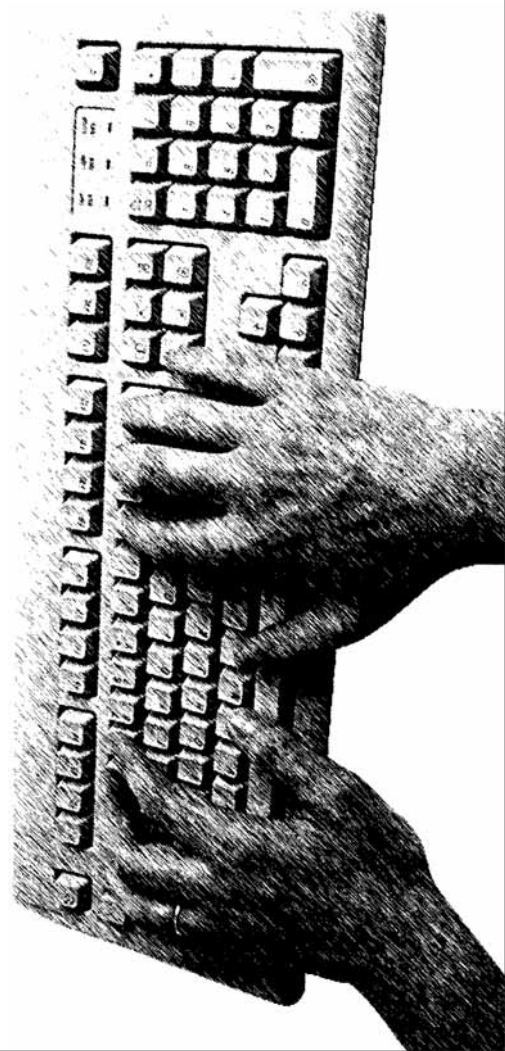


*Captain K. C. O'Brien,
U.S. Merchant Marine*

E-MAIL CORRECTIONS

Please make the following changes and corrections to your list of LClers E-Mail addresses

LCI	Name	Correct E-Mail
18	Gordon, Robert	flash3202@netzero.net
43	Smith, Gordon L.	milvet99@sbcglobal.net
66	Hawley, Donald	donhawley1@comcast.net
70	Ortiz, Gilbert V.	lci70@adelphia.net
78	Hartman, Robert F.	rhartman1@cfl.rr.com
237	Callery, Joseph	josephcallery@aol.com
320	McKinnon, Henry L.	mameak@hotmail.com
336	Robinson, Vincent L.	vincer@ftcnet.net
339	Vickerman, John	jvickerman@earthlink.net
351	Cooper, Keith	marykeith1@verizon.net
412	Barnes, Jefferson T.	jbarnes@barnesnjlw.com
412	Barnes, Patrick D.	patb@querysoftware.com
412	Barnes, Timothy L.	tbarnes@barnesnjlw.com
423	Lambrecht, Donald G.	altefurster@aol.com
433	Warner, Frank	fbwarner@erols.com
439	Nimeskern, John R.	jnimes@aol.com
447	Tucker, Ward J.	wjtucker2@comporium.net
452	Wilkes, John J.	johnjwilkesjr@yahoo.com
471	Dotson, Robert	lci471@aol.com
484	Shults, Robert	ws735375@aol.com
514	Mendelsohn, Daniel	dfellman@bigplanet.com
519	Weisel, Joseph	connie648@comcast.net
526	Biscotti, Ed	biscuits526@aol.com
528	Gassell, Robert L.	gasselsr@aol.com
540	France, David R.	france1222@comcast.net
561	Beckwith, Clifford F.	cliffb865@frontiernet.net
561	Pignataro, James R.	jpignat267@aol.com
566	Brettell, Claire	cbrettell@kc.rr.com
579	Busher, John S.	abush285@bellsouth.net
584	Ascherl, Robert J.	rjsbashrl1@msn.com
598	Rifenbaugh, Donald	rifeydon@hotmail.com
606	Levine, Henry	dihen67@verizon.net
613	Byheny, Robert	irish2631@aol.com
621	Selby, Louis L.	lselby26@yahoo.com
680	Brown, Thomas	usnsignalman@verizon.net or usslci680@verizon.net
710	Ruxlow, Frank	fjruxlowjr@sbcglobal.net
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