



"THE ELSIE ITEM"

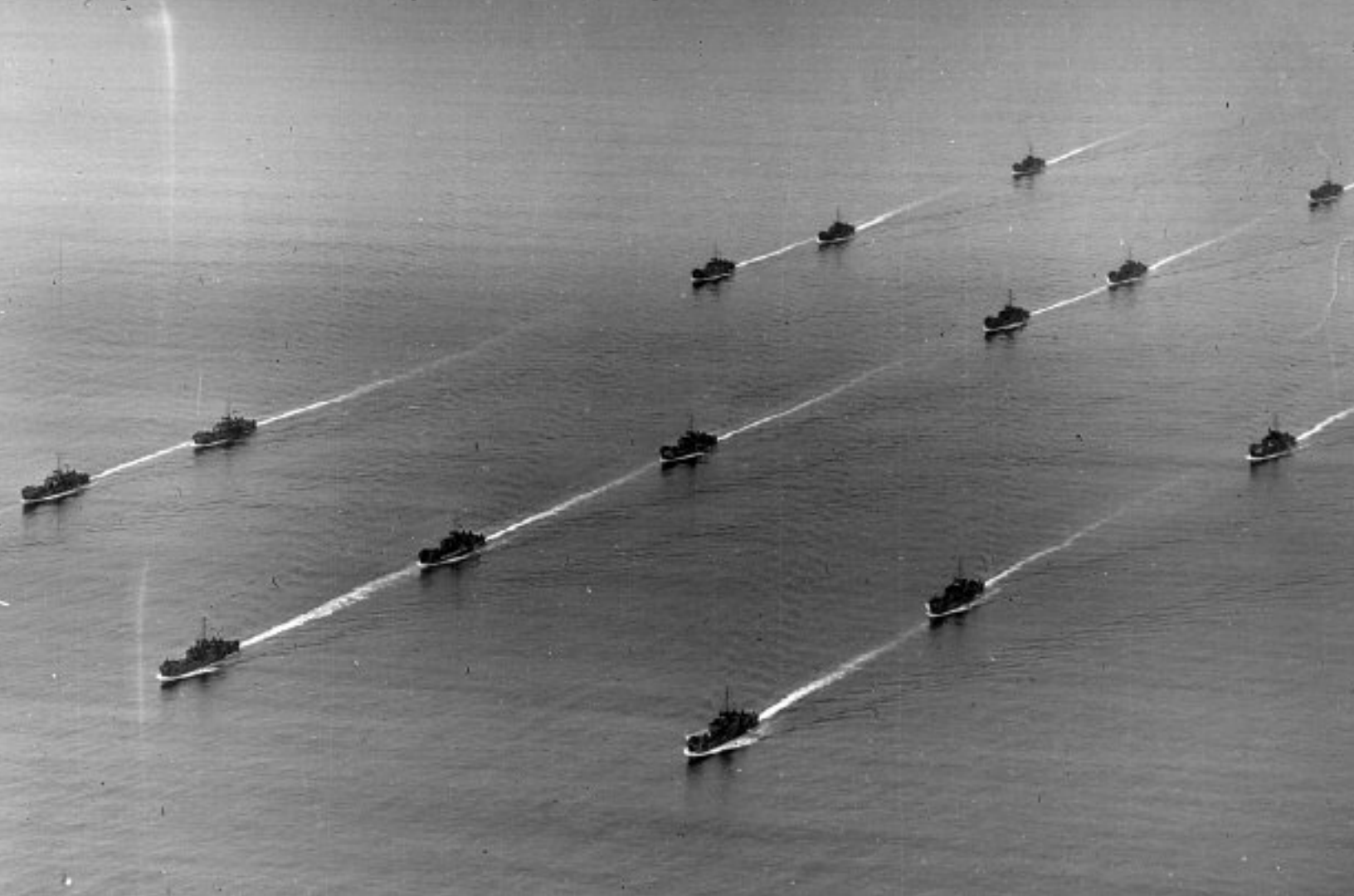
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
USS LANDING CRAFT, INFANTRY, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

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FEBRUARY 2009

ISSUE #66

SAILING INTO A NEW YEAR!



IN THIS ISSUE:

**Reunion Information! • News from the 1091 and the 713!
More Sea Stories!**

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. Affiliate 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, preferably by email (cummerj@bellsouth.net) or by regular mail to 302 Pinewood Cottage Lane, Blythewood, SC, 29016

CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES:

www.usslci.com

Our own website

www.amphibiousforces.com

For information on the 713 and Tiny's Ships Stores

THAT MORNING IN JUNE..!!

**That morning in June
The English Channel came alive
With landing craft..and men
Who were hoping...to survive
That morning in June
They slowly made their way
To the beaches there..in Normandy
On the day assigned..D-Day
That morning in June
Across the beaches...soldiers dashed
For many there...that morning
The day...would be their last
On that day in June
The Allies...called the tune
And this because...of what began
That morning....in June..!!**

*From "At Dawning"
Tony Chapman, Historian and Archivist
Royal Navy LST and Landing Craft Association*



From the Editor/President

I know you may be a bit surprised to be getting another issue of *Elsie Item* so soon, but we're trying for a quick turn-around on this issue for a couple of reasons: We want to get back onto our regular publication schedule (January, April, July, October) and because we want to give you every opportunity to register for the Portland reunion by sending a second copy of the program and registration blanks.



There's encouraging news to report on those two ships that are so important to us. The volunteers of the 1091 are still enthusiastic and optimistic about getting the ship up to Portland and you'll read Joe Flynn's report of that here. Also, Gordon Smith gives us most encouraging news about financial support for the 713. We're all looking forward to seeing those two ships moored to the dock at the Red Lion Hotel.

Recently we have made the acquaintance via email of Mr. Tony Chapman, official historian and archivist of the Royal Naval LST and Landing Craft Association. Tony was inquiring for any information we might have concerning U.S. LCIs who served under British Command. This was the experience of my LCI, the 502, so it touched off a lot of memories and an enjoyable exchange of correspondence with Tony. In the process I discovered that he is a poet who has used his talents to express beautifully and movingly the experience of being involved in D-Day. He has granted permission to use his verse in *Elsie Item* and we share some of it with you here.

Tony had asked me for pictures and an account of my LCI with the British forces on D-Day. In responding, I dug out a short account I had written several years ago and decided, after looking at it again, that it was worth sharing with you, even as so many of you have shared your experiences. In turn, that reminded me of one of the many funny moments we experienced, so I decided to share yet another tale – those one of taking an LCI on a duck-hunting expedition.

This, along with the material and information for registering for our May reunion makes up this issue. We hope you enjoy reading it.

-John Cummer



“Charlie Noble” will be Sad to See the 1091 Leave for Portland

By Joe Flynn

There is always an exception to the rule.

You would think that everyone would be happy to see the 1091 go to Portland for the LCI Reunion in 2009; but no, there is one who would hate to see it go. It's "Charlie Noble" the one footed Seagull who is the mascot and clean-up crew for the 1091.

Charlie lost one foot along the way, probably from getting tangled in a fishing line. But he manages well on one foot, and two wings. We are not sure who adopted who first, but Charlie has been a loyal volunteer, is always there when the rest of the crew comes aboard and always does his job of cleaning up leftovers from the donuts and rolls in the morning. He never strays far from the ship and is always the second, if not the first, to show up on workdays. And he is there when the last one leaves. Don't know if he has any rank yet, probably just a cook's helper so far. But they think he has ambitions. He has been eyeing the Birds on Capt. Mark Neeson's collar when he wears his uniform aboard.



All of you *Elsie Item* sailors are probably familiar with the term "Charlie Noble," but we have a lot of Affiliates who may not have heard it before. Charlie Noble was a Captain in the British Navy who insisted that the smokestack on the galley stove be polished everyday by the ships cook. So they started referring to the smokestack as "Charlie Noble" and we doubt it was a term of endearment.

If you are ever in Eureka to see the 1091, most likely Charlie Noble will be there to greet you, especially if you have snacks. Rumor has it that he likes pizza, and anchovy pizza is his favorite.

Welcome Aboard!

Once again we are very pleased to welcome aboard our Association a great group of new Affiliate Members and even some Regular LCIers who have just found us. Look at that list of Affiliate Members sponsored by Joe Canzone – three sons and two grandsons! Way to go, Joe!

So – as the Bos'n used to say, "Get out of your liberty clothes! Grab a paint scraper and a wire brush! Report to the Bos'n Locker! There's work to be done!"

New Regular Members

F.T. (Tom) Demoss
LCI 703
Houston, TX

Eugene F. Glarson
LCI 747
Redding CA

William Petter
LCI 987
South Haven, NC

Joseph Canzone, Jr,
Cypress, CA
Sponsored by Joseph L. Canzone,
LCI 313(G)

Kevin Canzone,
Anaheim Hills, CA
Sponsored by Joseph L. Canzone,
LCI 313(G)

Gordon Castanza
Big Harbor, WA

Patricia M. Davis
Indianapolis, IN

Jenna Englund,
Meridian, ID

Jack Farkas
Cordova, TN

Danny Fassold
Hillsboro, OR

Donald C. Fedrigan
Elk Rapid, MI

LTC Edward Flielming
Springfield, VA
Sponsored by M. Brendan Fleming,
LCI 714L

Sheri Fraser
Grand Terrace, CA.
Sponsored by Don Hawley, LCI 66G

Eric Karl
Moon Township, PA

Wanda Longnecker
Coatesville, PA

Pat Maio,
Orlando, FL
Sponsored by John Cummer, LCI
502

Sean Maio,
Orlando, FL
Sponsored by John Cummer, LCI
502

Jimmy Smith
Folsom, PA
Sponsored by John Cummer, LCI
502

Thomas L. Mayes
Smithfield, VA
Sponsored by Thomas B. Mayes,
LCI 492(L)

Alan Penson
Beaverton, OR
Sponsored by Robert L. Penson,
LCI 1024 (R)

T. A. Stewart,
Dallas, TX

Betty M. Swain
Widow of George E. Swain

Joe Wessel
Tampa, FL
Sponsored by L. Joeseeph Wessel,
LCI 25

New Affiliate Members

David Bauer
Lewisville, TX

Daniel Bertsch
Palm Desert, CA
Sponsored by William H. Bertsch

Ken Breiivik
Columbia, SC
Sponsored by John Cummer, LCI
502

Joseph P. Canzone
Cypress, CA
Sponsored by Joseph L. Canzone,
LCI 313(G)

John Canzone
Westminster, CA
Sponsored by Joseph L. Canzone,
LCI 313(G)

Sam Canzone,
Anaheim Hills, CA
Sponsored by Joseph L. Canzone,
LCI 313(G)



Meet Our New Affiliate Chaplain: Michael A. (“Mike”) Gatton



Affiliate Member Mike Gatton, son of John L. Gatton who served on LCI 96, has taken his place alongside our old friend Chaplain David Cox to serve as a second chaplain for our Association.

Dr. Michael A. “Mike” Gatton has been an ordained Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister for thirty-five years.

A native of Louisville, Dr. Gatton has served churches in Benton, Hazel Green, Old Grassy, White Oak, Somerset, and Louisville, Kentucky. He is a former high school teacher and coach and continues to speak at national and state youth events. Mike recently completed ten years in development ministry with both the Christian Church Homes of Kentucky and the Presbyterian Homes and Services of Kentucky. He presently serves as pastor of the Hurstbourne Christian Church in Louisville.

Mike is a graduate of the University of Louisville with a B.A. in English, Louisville Seminary with a Masters in Divinity and Vanderbilt University with a Doctor in Ministry. He also has a teaching certificate from Murray State University.

Gatton has won awards for Volunteer of the Year in both Marshall and Pulaski Counties. He was the founder of the Agape Gang Youth Mission Team and presently serves on boards with the Christian Church In Kentucky, the Fern Creek High School Alumni Association, the Luther Luckett Prison Ministry, the Middletown Christian Village, and the Kentucky Association of Blind Athletes. Mike is also chairman of the board for the Foundation for Older Adults and the Eastern Area Christian Ministries.

Mike lives on his Canaan farm near Jeffersontown, Kentucky, with his yellow lab, Joshua. He enjoys travel, motivational speaking, and landscaping.

“I’m glad to be a small part of the LCI team, said Mike. “What a privilege to work along side of those I consider heroes and mentors”.

Welcome aboard, Chaplain Mike!

The Chaplain’s Corner

With this issue, we’re pleased to begin “The Chaplain’s Corner” and have asked our new Affiliate Chaplain Mike Gatton to introduce himself to you with a few words.

“We’ve Only Just Begun”

During World War II, after much bleak and discouraging news, there came a period when it seemed the trend was reversed and the news more encouraging. Winston Churchill warned his people against complacency: “We have victory—a remarkable, definite victory. The bright gleam has caught the helmets of our soldiers and warmed and cheered all our hearts. Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is perhaps, the end of the beginning.”

There are no permanent victories. There is never a point in life where we can say, “Now I have arrived.” Sooner or later we wake up to the realization that regardless of our successes, achievements and honors, there are no permanent destinations in our journeys, only intersections. There are some temporary destinations we reach; but, forever, there is an agenda of unfinished business between us and God and each other.

There is never any ground for complacency. Our destinations are temporary, our victories fleeting. We cannot remain where we are. We’ve got to keep on growing and opening ourselves to new possibilities. The Apostle Paul realized this when he wrote: “One thing I do, forgetting what lies behind, and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God...” (Philippians 3:14).

Regardless of our age or time in life, when a significant person or experience comes to us, we have a new beginning. At each intersection of life, we are born again. And, as we enter this new year together, we need to be aware that God has more truths for us to learn, more victories for us to win, more persons for us to love, more rivers for us to cross, more loads to lift, more beaches to land upon, and more kingdoms to conquer. No matter what age we might be, in the eyes of God, “We’ve only just begun!”

Agape, Mike

Can You Help Us Find Out What's Happened To these Missing Shipmates?

A new U. S. Postal Service requirement that lists for mass mailings be submitted before the mailing so that they can be checked against their data base for bad addresses has resulted in our learning that we do not have good addresses for 47 members and 5 widows on our Elsie Item mailing list. We realize that some of these may have passed away and we just did not know of it, but others may still be with us.

We need your help! Please study this list carefully to see if you recognize any of the names and can tell us anything about them. Should you have helpful information, please call us at 803/865-5665 or write to us at USS LCI National Association, c/o Nehemiah Communications, Inc., 101 Rice Bent Way, #6, Columbia, SC 29229

We've listed them by ship number so that you can check for shipmates:

LCI	NAME	LAST KNOWN HOME TOWN
22G	John A Clawson	Vero Beach, FL
23L	Robert A Kehrwald	Mundelin, IL
46L	Gerard M. Dunn	Narragansett, RI
69L	Zach T. Stanborough	Metarie, LA
74R	Bob E. Gowin	Independence, MO
80G	Kurtis B. Finch	Terrace Park, OH
316L	Walter J. Beekman	Westlake, OH
338R	Robert Lewis	Visalia, CA
345G	Ralph J. Tolonen	Poulsbo, WA
355L	Frank J. Flickinger	Cottonwood, AZ
356M	David M. Nelson	Green Valley, AZ
373G	Joe G. Dominick	Gloster, MS
428L	Dr. John W. Manning	Saginaw, MI
437G	Ronald J. Sabourin	South Grafton, MA
438G	Ralph E. Ebersole	Bainbridge, PA
438G	Tracy E. Lord	Summerfield, FL
444L	Albert W. Tiedeman	Richmond, VA
445L	Thomas H. Milldebrandt	Phoenix, AZ
454G	Richard J. Wader	Carnelian Bay, CA
455G	William H. Clingan	Westville, IN

LCI	NAME	LAST KNOWN HOME TOWN
459L	Richard C. Houser	Lake Havasu City, AZ
464G	George A. Lingle	Hudson, SD
470G	Norman L. Garton	Joliet, IL
532L	Arthur D.Morrison	Highland City, FL
533L	Robert F. Edwards	Fountain Hills, AZ
536L	Charles H. Kehlenbrink	Richmond, IN
556G	Walter A. Simonsen	Baltimore, MD
575F	Anthony Zito	Elmhurst, IL
618F	Kenneth F. Bevan	Goshen, NY
632M	Troy E. Chandler	Spencer, WV
636L	Warren N. Fritts	Haddon Township, NJ
650R	Lee B. Marshall	Tega Cay, SC
671M	Calvin E. Gurney	Rumford, ME
678L	Horace A. McMullen	Moreland, GA
693L	Vincent B. Warren	Forest Grove, OR
703L	Ivan R. Zeigler	Pana, IL
705L	Everett E.Klipp	Flossmoor, IL
706R	Norman L. Bolling	Asheville, NC
725 L	Stanley E. Barlow	Hacienda Heights, CA
731L	Harrison D. Goodman	Bellmore, NY
744L	James M. Jackson	Port Neches, TX
751G	Joseph P. Kohutis	Woodbridge, NJ
756M	A. J. Wrape	Little Rock, AR
765R	Clifton G. Killinger	Dauphin, PA
802M	Ellis E. Bradford	Pendleton, SC
802M	Wiliam Strabavy	Rapid City, MI
1030L	Richard F. Andresik	Grand Rapids, MI
	Mrs. Helene Friedman	Powell, OH
	Mrs. Bea Gleason	Dennis, MA
	Mrs. Mary Lou Hesse	Guthrie Center, IA
	Mrs. Agnes Hurdle	Chalmette, LA
	Mrs. Louise Telmnik	Strongsville,OH

Thank you for any help you can give us with any of these names.



USS LCI 502 AT D-DAY

John P. Cummer

(based on personal recollections and the Deck Log of USS LCI 502)



Crowded to the limit, we moved back to our normal berthing place at New Docks along with the other LCIs of Group 31. On Sunday, June 4th, the crew turned to for final preparations for the coming operation. A church party went ashore and returned, and the crowded troops were permitted ashore for some needed exercise.



The Day Draws Near

On Saturday, the third of June, our ship, the USS LCI(L) 502, moved to Royal Pier, Southampton, England, and embarked 196 men and officers of the Durham Light Infantry, 151st Brigade, 50th Northumbrian Division, British 8th Army. They were carrying freshly printed French currency, a positive sign that this trip was for real.

As they clambered aboard, carrying folded bicycles and with various bits of equipment hanging about them, they looked somewhat more like peddlers than soldiers. They were, however, first class troops and were to prove themselves so again in the fighting that lay ahead.

The usual general quarters were sounded for an air raid alert at 2030, and we stood to our guns for some twenty minutes before securing

Our group did not participate in the abortive foray on June 5th which had to be recalled because of bad weather, but the certainty of our sailing for the "far shore" was underlined when, at 1400, ship's company was assembled to hear the message of General Eisenhower to the Allied Expeditionary Force:





Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force!

You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave Allies and brothers-in-arms on other Fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely.

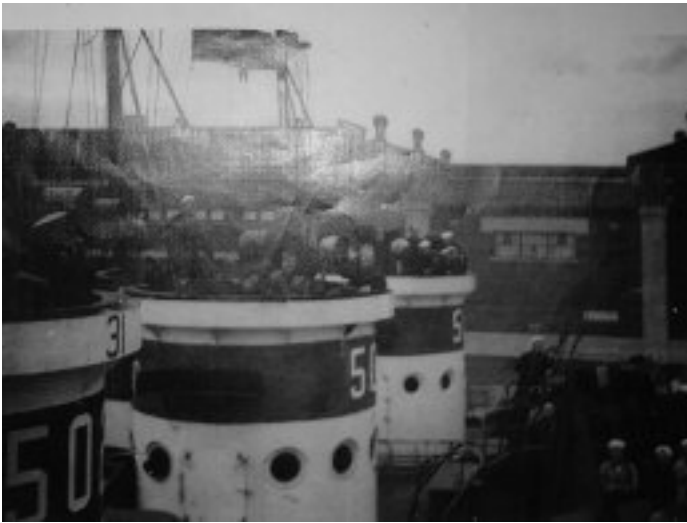
But this is the year 1944! Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41. The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground. Our Home Fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to Victory!

I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full Victory!

Good Luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.

Dwight D. Eisenhower





LCI 502, first ship to the left, awaits the order to sail for France



Jolly Miller and I shared the bow watch from 2000 to midnight that night. As usual he was ebullient and talkative, excited about what was coming

“Just think, JP,” he said to me, “by this time tomorrow we’ll be veterans!”

I think I shared some of his anticipatory excitement, but when we were relieved at midnight, I felt the need to be alone.

Imminent danger has a way of awakening spiritual concerns. Godly parents had raised me to take the Christian faith seriously. On this night before battle, I felt the need for reminding myself of the certainties and comforts of that faith.

Finding a place to be alone on a 153 foot landing craft crowded with 196 troops can be a problem, but I had my own private place, cramped though it was. Under the fantail deck was the small magazine where ammunition was stored. As the Gunner’s Mate, I had the key to that small cubbyhole and so it was to that place that I retreated for my quiet time.

I sat on the cold, steel deck, surrounded by the cases of ammunition and read from the New Testament that had been given to me by the Gideons. The guide to references inside the front cover had suggestions for special times.



Throughout that day more and more ships slipped out of the once crowded harbor until it seemed that we were the only ones left. It was an eerie sensation.

Finally, at 2000, our group began slipping lines and standing out into the channel. The 502 cast off at 2012, taking its place in column behind the 512. Our escort ship, *HMS Albrighton*, met us as we passed Needles Light on the eastern tip of the Isle of Wight and, forming into divisions for the assault, we were on our way.



One was “for times of peril or danger”, and it directed me to Psalm 91:

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God, in Him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee...”

“...but it shall not come nigh thee...”

A deep sense, not of fearless bravado, but of assurance in the protection of a sovereign God came to me as I read those verses. To this day, every time I re-read them, that tiny steel cubicle, surrounded by cases of ammunition, pitching with the motion of the sea, comes immediately to mind.

In God’s providence, that protection was afforded to me and my shipmates on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

The Assault

In the early hours of June 6th, as we entered the swept channels through the minefields north of Seine Bay, hoping that the minesweepers had done their job, the nine LCIs of Group 31 formed up for the assault as directed in Group Commander Patrick’s order. We were in three columns, the first led by the 501 with the 507 and the 509 in her trail. In the center column, Commander Patrick rode in his flagship, the 512 with the 500 and the 499 astern. In the right hand column, the 506 led with our 502 and the 508 following.

As the sun rose that morning, we could make out the vast armada around us, and the almost-total canopy of allied aircraft overhead with the distinctive D-Day markings of black and white stripes painted on wings and fuselage. Someone, later describing this scene, said that it looked as though you could walk across the English Channel on the wings of the aircraft.

In the distance we could see the smoke of the beach. The noise of the naval bombardment was continuous.

At 0755, our escort vessel, *HMS Albrighton*, used their blinker signal light to advise us that assaults were going according to plan. We sighted the coast of France at 0855 and began circling in the ingoing area waiting for the signal for our group to proceed to the beach. Shortly after 0900, Commander Patrick signaled the group to prepare to beach. The last movement was underway.

My battle station was at the number one gun atop the focs’l, thus placing me in the farthest point forward aboard our ship, a genuine ring-side seat, but one which had the drawback of being an excellent and highly visible target. With our gun cocked and loaded we talked, watched and waited, speculating as to what was going on ashore, when we would head in and how much opposition we would face.

In the log book, Mr. Krenicky, our Engineering Officer, who made the entries for that memorable day, noted that they observed a German tank hit on a hillside and, as we shifted to beaching stations at 1030, that a German 75mm gun was still in operation as well as mortar fire.

At 1040 he wrote:

“Standing in to Jig Green sector of Gold Beach, Asnelles-Sur-Mer, Arromanches sector”





The noise, smoke and confusion grew as we threaded our way through a mass of wrecked landing craft, tanks and beach obstacles. The nice, tight directions of our Group Commander as to our order of landing disappeared as the confusion of the beach made it totally impossible. It was every ship for itself.

I was told years later by a crew member of the 508 that their Captain had his eye on the same landing spot for which we were headed, and cursed our Skipper roundly as we beat him to it.

Our landing resembled none of the multitude of practice landings we had made. We scraped over some submerged object for the length of the ship but suffered no damage.



At one point, close to the shore, our bow was aimed directly at a sunken truck with two wet, forlorn-looking soldiers clinging to it. At the last moment, we changed course to avoid them. With a look of great relief on their faces, they waved to us as we lurched past them on our way to the rather improbable landing spot our Skipper had chosen out of necessity - a broached British LCT.



Gold Beach on D-Day: LCI 502 with her bow up against HM LCT 857

HM LCT 857 was stranded, parallel to the beach. She had taken a good pounding and was in no shape or position to disengage herself from the beach. but she did make what our Skipper considered the best possible place for disembarking our troops, so he ran our bow right up on to the broached LCT.

The ramps were extended, dropped onto the LCT at somewhat perilous angles, and our bicycle-toting Tommies struggled down our ramps, clambered over the LCT and finally dropped off onto the beach itself.

While our troops were disembarking we became involved in two rescue missions. With no threat from German aircraft (and much too small to consider challenging German 88s!), we on the

Focs'l secured our gun and became busily involved in those rescue missions

First, the skipper of the British LCT on whom we had descended uninvited, asked if we could give him a tow as we retracted. Bos'n Walt Sellers and some of the deck gang rigged a cable and passed it to the LCT, the plan being to try to "unbroach" them as we retracted.

Then some British sailors, stranded on the beach after losing their small boats in the first wave, asked if we could take them off the beach. We passed another line down to them; they secured it to some place on the broached LCT and began climbing, hand over hand, up to our focs'l. We hung, somewhat precariously, out over the bow, leaning down to grab them and haul them aboard. We were able to rescue 27 of them when the Skipper decided it was time to retract.

At 1141 Bos'n Sellers was ordered to cast off the line to the LCT and the Skipper began backing our LCI off the beach. The line that the small boat survivors were using snapped taut; one sailor fought for dear life to hang on. We were able to reach down and grab him before the line parted.

With the perspective of a sailor on the bow, instead of an officer in the Conning Tower, I was livid. I was sure we could have rescued more of the British sailors and spared them the continued danger of exposure to gunfire on the beach. I was equally sure that we could have done more to help the broached LCT get off the beach. The issue, I was told later, was that time was running out before the tide began to turn.

Was the Skipper right in pulling out when he did? Probably. Other crew members grumbled angrily about it as I did; but, in retrospect, there is no reason to question his decision. The "what if . . ." game is one of the most futile of all enterprises.

After successfully retracting, we threaded our way back through the wreckage that littered Gold Beach. Our part in the D-Day assault was over. We had successfully landed our troops. The work of support - ferrying fresh troops across the channel - was about to begin.

We stayed at action stations for the rest of D-Day. Around us the gun support ships were firing almost continuously. *HMS Belfast*, now on permanent display in London on the Thames just opposite the Tower of London, was one of the ships closest to us. We could tell little of what was happening ashore. There were ceaseless explosions on the beach and a pall of gun smoke hung over everything. Overhead, wave after wave of aircraft, fortunately bearing the black and white D-Day striping of the invasion forces, came on steadily.

Around 1600 we were formed up with other LCIs and set out on our return trip to England. We had been warned about the possibility of German E-Boats dashing out for raids, so we were more than usually tense that night as we strained our eyes to see in the darkness. Nothing happened, but the long tension-packed day and anxious watch left me, and I am sure other crew members, exhausted.

At 2315 the lights of the Isle of Wight came into view. We were safely back from the "far shore."



LCI 502—“The Duck Hunter”

by John Cummer

OK, guys, it's my turn to tell a sea story!

It was a beautiful warm day in the fall of 1943 and the trees upon the nearby shore of Chesapeake Bay were in lovely color. All morning we had exercised with our LCI group undergoing formation training. Following the lead of the group commander we had dashed hither and yon – column formation, simultaneous flank turns, Vee formation for beaching – whatever he could think up. He hoisted his flags, we executed. After a morning of this exercise, he signaled for all ships to “orbit independently” for noon chow and to reassemble upon his signal for continuation of the drills.

Our crew went to mess. ENS Bill Krenicky, our Engineering Officer- all of 21 years old- had the conn.

Radioman Pete Trask was signalman of the watch, and I was the lookout. We circled at slow speed and, with nothing to occupy ourselves, engaged in desultory conversation.

A flock of ducks flew in and settled on the water about a half mile off our port bow. Someone suggested that we go over to look at the ducks and Mr. Krenicky obligingly conned the ship in that direction. As we neared, the ducks took off. Then someone (anonymity is wise at this point) said, “Let's go duck hunting!”

“Great, I'll get the guns,” said Gunner Cummer; and dashed off to the small arms locker to get the most appropriate of our rather inappropriate weapons – a .22 rifle and a .22 pistol. I gave Pete the rifle and he stationed himself in the conning tower. I took the trusty .22 pistol to the bow. Mr. Krenicky again conned the ship to the ducks' resting place. Again, as we neared, they took off; and Pete and I began our futile popping away as the ducks veered off to the right.

Mr. Krenicky then seemingly totally carried away with the spirit of the chase and without fully considering the consequences, shouted into the voice tube to the helmsman in the pilot house below, “Flank speed! Hard Right Rudder!”

Picture the scene below. The crew is at mess. All is in order. The engine noise is monotonous and subdued. Suddenly the engines roar to life and the ship tilts so that metal chow trays slide off onto the deck. All sorts of things come loose and make noise.

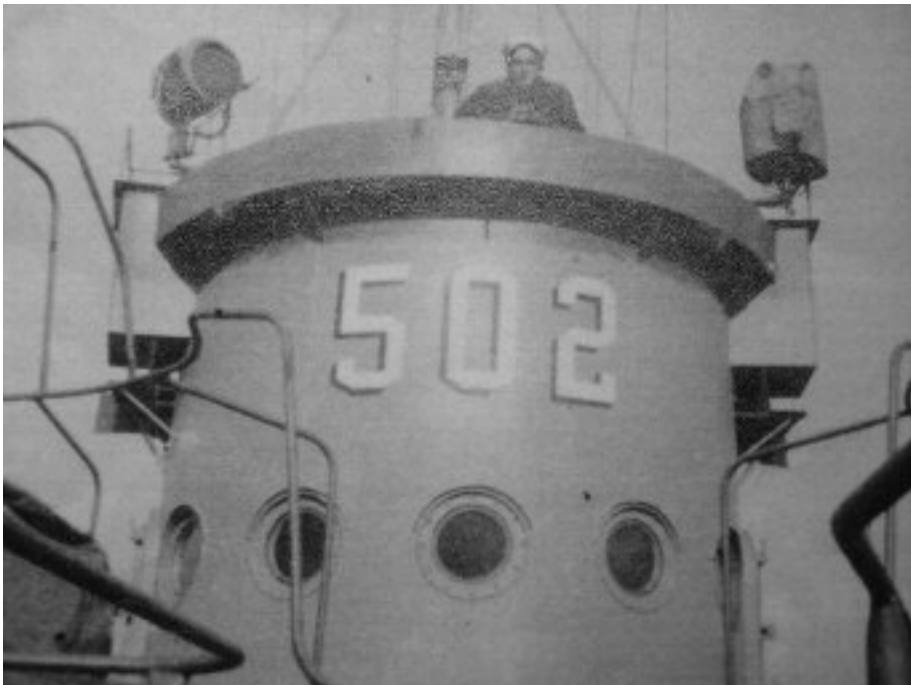
The Skipper, Mr. Humsjo, must have been immediately convinced that the ship was in imminent peril. He leaped from his seat in the wardroom, bounded up the ladder to the gun deck, then up the second ladder to the conning tower. White as a sheet, he sputtered, “What's wrong? What's wrong?”

And Mr. Krenicky grinned and said, “We were duck hunting!”

Apoplexy was followed by livid rage. Rather forcefully, the Skipper explained why what we were doing was not a good idea and what sort of dire punishment would await us if we ever did anything like that again. Now, being a sailor, I do not want to exaggerate, but I seem to recall a distinctly bluish cast to the atmosphere in the Captain's immediate vicinity.

And so, for the first time in history I am sure, a warship of the United States Navy went duck hunting. It will probably not happen again soon.

At least we did not use the Thompson sub-machine guns.



Radioman Pete Trask in the Conn



AMPHIBIOUS FORCES MEMORIAL MUSEUM GETS GRANT FOR 713 RESTORATION

Steel for Bottom Restoration to be Purchased; Major Expenses Still Ahead

More good news about the 713!

In the last issue we reported on the locating of engines for the LCI being restored by the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum. Now, AFFM Board Chairman Gordon Smith is excited to announce that the State of Oregon has given a \$20,000 grant toward the project. The further good news is that the grant required a matching contribution and that amount is already in the bank. The bulk of that was the profit from the sale of a shrimp trawler which had been donated to the museum.

With these funds on hand, the Museum Board of Directors plans to proceed with the purchase of steel necessary for not only the new bottom, but also for the supporting structure. Encouraged by this provision, a major fund-raising campaign is underway to raise the estimated \$250,000 needed for the shipyard work to be done.

Gordon also reports that Thomas S. Wilson, a highly skilled and experienced Naval Architect, is doing the planning for the project. Wilson is a former Lieutenant in the Navy with service in Viet Nam. He was officer-in-charge of PCF [Patrol Craft, Fast] 94. Former Presidential Candidate John Kerry was the officer who relieved Thomas Wilson. And, in another touch with history, Gordon reports that Tom's great grandfather was the architect for the famed Civil War ironclad, the *Monitor!*

"I cannot say how thankful we are to have such a person take so much interest in our project and aid in it's accomplishment," comments Gordon.

Winslow's calculations on the amount of steel needed were put out for bid and it appears that the delivered cost will be close to \$44,000. The initial effort of the funding campaign will be to raise the \$4,000 needed for the purchase of the steel.

"This, we will somehow surmount!" says Gordon, "Our motto is 'Full Speed Ahead!'"

The Museum directors have applied for a \$250,000 grant for the expensive part of the dry-docking and the application of the steel to the ship. This high price is due to the labor intensive nature of the job.

"The grant will also require matching funds," says Gordon, "but with the State of Oregon giving us recognition, we feel that will assist us in obtaining funding from other local foundations." If this grant is not forthcoming, the museum will seek grants from foundations and reapply for the State of Oregon grant.



.Contributions from LCers can play a significant role in raising these funds.

“I am glad to report that in the mail yesterday, there was a check in the amount of \$100.00 from Bill and Sura McVicker for the ‘Get The LCI #713 Underway Fund,’” says Gordon.

Meanwhile, the dedicated volunteers continue the work of restoration.

“I only wish you could have been aboard the 713 Saturday,” says Gordon. “We have been snowed in for a couple of weeks and after some of us had breakfast together, I went down to the ship where we had at least a dozen volunteers there ready to go to work! One man, Jerry Ubigau travels over 200 miles [one way] from Bothel, Washington. What a crew!”

With the encouraging news of the engines located and the grant obtained, it’s time for LCers to show their support for this hard-working crew of volunteers. We will all take great pride in the 713 when she is fully restored, especially if we come through with financial support now when the funds are needed. Let’s follow the example of Bill and Sara McVicker. Whatever you can send will be greatly appreciated. Send your contribution to:

“Get the LCI 713 Underway Fund”

P.O. Box 17220
Portland, OR 97217

FOOTSTEPS IN THE SAND..!!

**Footsteps in the sand
Left by men..who passed this way
They stood.....for a fleeting moment
And then....they sped away
Footsteps in the sand
Which will never..be erased
Despite the pass...of time and tides
They will never...fade away
Footsteps in the sand
Which will last..forever more
Left by men.....who landed here
On June 6th..of 44..!!**

—from “At Dawning”

*By Tony Chapman, Historian and Archivist
Royal Navy LST and Landing Craft Association*



Songs of the LCI's

At the San Diego LCI Reunion in September, Bill Keeler, came up with the words to these songs of the LCI's:

The first is sung to the tune of, "Don't Fence Me In." You old-timers may have to tell the youngsters about this popular song of the '40s.

The Landing Song

***Let me land in the sand
With the General and the Band,
Don't send me in.***

***Let me float in a boat
Till the enemy's remote,
Don't send me in.***

***I want to go back to the farm
Raising pigs and pullets
Big beef steaks for civilian gullets
I don't mind the guns
But I can't stand bullets
Don't send me in.....***

And the encore is.....
Sung to the tune of
"Put your Arms Around Me Honey"

***Just put her in a corner
And hold her tight like this,
Wrap your arms around her waist
And on her lips a kiss***

***If she starts to murmur
Or if she starts to sigh,
Just tell her it's a sacred seal
Of all the LCI's !***



IN MEMORIAM

“Almighty and eternal God, from whose love we cannot be parted, either by death or life; hear our prayers and thanksgiving for those whom we here remember. Grant unto sorrowing family and shipmates the blessing of your peace that passeth understanding”

LCI 35
John J. Finnerty

LCI 456
Louis G. Iaquinto

LCI 662
Glenn R. Cramer

LCI 36
Joseph Roberts

LCI 469
William B. Dudley

LCI 673
Hubert L. Humphreys

LCI 415
John Raab

LCI 553
Donald C. DuBrul

LCI 740
Harold F. Paul

LCI 440
John R. Garringer

LCI 568
Robert J. Rice

LCI 1077
Clyde H. Flynn

LCI 577
Jay Shiff



The 1091—Looking Better and Better!

By Joe Flynn

“Steam Up” Well, not quite – that’s steam from a lumber plant, but it sure looks like the 1091 is ready to take off!

With hopes high, work is progressing on the restoration of the 1091 with an eye on the trip to Portland!

Sure’an it would be a sight to warm the salt-soaked cockles of an *Elsie Item* sailor’s heart to see the 713 and the 1091 tied up together next to the Red Lion. Then we could say, “The Fleet’s in! Liberty for all hands!”

Many of the LCI sailors had a chance to go aboard the 713 during the 2004 National Reunion in Portland to see up close the restoration work of the volunteers. [More about that in another article in this issue!] Many have also had the chance to spend time on the 1091 during the California Reunions of recent years. .Sometimes those visits included lunch aboard with the opportunity to have chow from the galley served on those well-remembered stainless steel trays.

Now, this may defy the laws of logic but it is an observed fact; when LCI sailors walk those decks of steel, it puts a little spring in their step. This is no sea story. You will have a chance to see this for yourself in Portland.

On one memorable reunion in Eureka in 2005, Capt. Ralph Davis fired up the engines and treated the LCI sailors, wives and family to a Humboldt Bay cruise aboard the 1091. It was a trip that brought back many memories. The Bay was reasonably calm that day, so those who were aboard for the first time did not have a chance to experience the rough ride of that flat-bottomed vessel that LCI sailors have described in vivid detail.

Visitors to the 1091 can now see what crowded living conditions were like since bunks in the troop compartments have been restored to their original location and configuration. You will be welcome to try out one, but, stacked four high, in pairs, will certainly discourage anyone with claustrophobia.

Throughout the ship progress in restoration, under project manager LeRoy Marsh, is evident; but like an iceberg, the majority is not apparent to the naked eye. Well, to the untrained naked eye perhaps, but LCI sailors look beneath that fresh coat of navy gray. They will remember chipping paint, knocking out rust, welding in new deck plates or bulkheads, then and only then putting on that primer coat followed by the fresh coat of paint we now see. The lights and instruments work as they should, now that the miles of wiring have been tested, breaks and corrosion found and fixed then powered up once more. And few would appreciate the polished brass portholes and equipment more than one who has worked to maintain that gleaming metal in a harsh marine environment. The 1091 has a volunteer who specializes in polishing brass. He don’t paint, and he don’t do windows, but he will root out brass from under layers of paint and years of neglect and bring it back to a high gloss that is ready for inspection.



Outside, major repairs are evident, and those who went aboard in September appreciated the new ladders, one from the well deck to the gun deck and one from the fantail to the gun deck. These ladders were paid for by director Don Hanner, and installed by the volunteers.

A new doghouse has been installed to provide cover from the troop compartments to the galley and mess deck. A new ladder is on order to fit within this cover. The museum has a full set of the original plans for the 1091 and is following those plans as closely as possible. Numerous trips to the Moth Ball fleet in Suisun Bay have retrieved a number of shipping containers full of equipment and material for the restoration. Mark Neeson, a director of the museum is also a Captain in the Naval Reserve and has been instrumental in securing unused equipment.

And of course, previous owner Capt. Ralph "Doc" Davis, who donated the 1091 to the Museum, is still the number one volunteer. Doc purchased the ship in 1988 and converted it from a salmon cannery operation into an albacore fishing boat. In 1995 Jim McCarthy convinced him to sail the 1091, with a crew of LCI sailors, to San Diego for an LCI Reunion. That reunion was the largest ever with over 950 registered. In the three days of open house, some 6,000 visitors came aboard the ship. After that, the 1091's fishing days were numbered and her return to a Landing Craft Infantry began. With a little bit of luck, we will all be able to see this restoration work-in-progress in Portland.

The museum relies on contributions, and Doc Davis has estimated it will take 6,000 gallons of diesel fuel for the trip to Portland, and Uncle Sam is no longer providing the fuel. A Coast Guard inspection before the trip will likely require additional or updated safety equipment. In this part of the Pacific, survival suits are required for all hands in addition to the standard life rafts and signaling devices. No one is certain of the total crew or of the total sailing time yet, but whatever the number, it will take a lot of chow and a lot of coffee to make the trip. So if you are interested in helping sail the 1091 to Portland, you can send your cash, check, or money orders to;

Humboldt Bay Naval Air/Sea Museum

Attn: LeRoy Marsh, Project Director
USS LCI(L)1091
P.O. Box 111
Fields Landing, CA 95537

Checks should be made out to the Humboldt Bay Naval Air/Sea Museum. And as they used to say on the "electric radio" keep those cards and letters coming in.

The 1091 volunteers are excited and determined to do their best to see that the ship gets to Portland. However, in the event the 1091 cannot make the trip to Portland, all donations would be re-directed to the restoration of the ship. One way or another, your contribution will be a big help.



1091 Volunteer George Thode checks out troop compartment bunks



Tough Days for the 341 at New Guinea

By Dennis R. Blocker II

Patiently the cameraman gave instructions to the group of men who were about to die, "You there on the left, move in closer." Just as he was ready to snap the picture he noticed the American landing craft's skipper walking past. The Australian soldiers noticed as well and asked him and another American officer to get in the picture with them. The Aussies, kneeling in front of the bow of the LCI that proudly displayed "341" all looked at the camera and within a few seconds a loud "Click" was heard. For many it would be their last picture and this their last day alive.



LTJG Robert Wolf, Skipper of LCI 341, on far right with troops of the Australian 9TH Division

With the supplies loaded and all the troops aboard, the American skipper ordered the ship into reverse and the aft winch activated. Slowly the old girl backed and pulled herself off the soft sands of Hollandia and began her perilous journey...destination, Lae, New Guinea.

While at sea the American crew of the LCI (L)-341 checked all the equipment over and over again to be sure it would be ready for this their first invasion. All hands were a bit nervous but they had been trained and now it was show time. No one wanted to look cowardly in front of the Australians so there was a lot of tough talk of what everyone was going to do to the Japanese once they got to their destination. The men mingled well with each other swapping liberty stories and showing pictures of, "The Girl I Left Behind."

Early on the morning of September 4, 1943 General Quarters was sounded and all hands reported to their stations. On the bow 20-mm was GM1/c George Mack the gun captain. He had personally stripped the gun and made sure its slide was right and all movable parts were well oiled and in perfect working condition. Another Gunners Mate, Leonard Ruffin, was milling around checking to make sure all the guns were manned and primed and ready to go. The seamen made one last check on the ramp workings to be sure everything was on line and ready to go without a hitch. So far so good.

With the first crack of sunlight on the horizon the men could begin to make out the outline of New Guinea off in the distance. Then the sound of a tremendous thunder could be heard as the capital ships of Australia, England and the United States pounded the New Guinea coast with a fury that would make the gods shake with fear. "Boom!" "Boom!" "Boom!" "Krump!" "Krump!" "Krump!" The destruction was evident as huge fires could be seen in the distance...the jungle was burning.

Before too long word was received for all the LCI's to form up in line abreast and head in to the beaches at Lae. Now, with their hearts pounding and sweat pouring down their faces, the American gunners gripped their 20-mm's and the ammo passers glanced around to be sure everything was placed within easy reach. Uneasy smiles were flashed around, and everyone looked straight ahead at the beach.

The Americans felt sorry for the Australians soldiers who were still cooped up in the number one, two and three troop compartments down below. At least the Americans could see what was happening. The Australians would have to depend on their imagination which was not helpful.



The skipper of the 341 Lt. (j.g.) Robert W. Rolf, of Rock Island, Illinois, was in the conning tower keeping a close eye on the LCIs on his flanks to be sure they did not get out of line. He wanted to hit the beach at the same time as everyone else. Everything so far was going just as rehearsed.

Suddenly, just out of the jungles skimming the tree tops swooped three Japanese "Betty" bombers and five fighter planes. "They were so close I felt like I could reach up to them," said Gunners Mate George Mack. No one had time to respond as the planes skimmed the canopy of trees. However, some 20-mm gun crews from the various LCI's did get some shots off and a few planes were seen trailing smoke.

This was little consolation to the 341. Now, just three hundred yards off shore, she was ripped from the bow to the fantail with machine gun bullets from the Japanese fighter planes. The Aussies waiting on deck were torn to shreds. Pieces of flesh and uniforms and equipment flew everywhere as the mass of humanity was decimated. Once the fighter screen swept through; the bombers, that had been following, passed close over head dropping their bombs.

Bombs were splashing in the water all around but one planted itself right through the entry into the Number Two troop compartment and exploded ripping the bulkheads from their seams and flooding the Numbers 1, 2 and 3 troop compartments. When the bomb exploded it obliterated the Aussies who were patiently waiting to emerge. The men were never completely accounted for.

With the troop compartments flooding, the troops were yelling, cursing and begging to be allowed to get off the ship; however, the ship had begun to list to port and was already at ten degrees causing the men to fall over each other. The same was happening to the crew of the 341 who were trying to hold on. Seaman John Walczak suffered broken ribs when he fell from the starboard side to the port side of the ship. In fact the list of the ship became so great that George Mack up on the bow thought the ship was going to roll completely over. "Most of the crew members who were on the deck thought the thing was going to turn upside down," exclaimed Mr. Mack in a November 2008 interview. Because of this, when the ship began to roll heavily to the port, Mack leapt from the bow into the water as he did not want to get trapped under the ship.

When Gunner Mack made his frightful leap, he was fifty yards from the beach which was still being riddled and bombed by enemy aircraft. While he was swimming to shore he saw his ship slowly right itself momentarily just as it rammed full force into the beach.

With the ramps down the Australians emptied off the ship in record time in a mood that would be fatal to many a Japanese soldier. With the troops debarked Lt. (j.g.) Rolf ordered his gunners to stay alert for enemy planes and everyone else was ordered to help with damage control and aiding the wounded Australians. Fortunately not one American was wounded other than poor Walczak who had some very painful rib fractures.

Wave after wave of Japanese fighters and bombers came over the invasion beach making it a living hell for the crew of the 341. The ship had by this time settled on its side and was full of water from the engine room to the bow. Seeing the ship was unseaworthy, Rolf ordered the crew to leave the ship and dig foxholes in the jungle to defend the ship from Japanese land assault and to provide protection from the constant bombings and strafing. With the crew safely debarked, Rolf began to assess the damage done.

Meanwhile the Australians had fought magnificently and were pushing the Japanese further and further back. Several Aussies had stayed behind to remove the dead from the stricken LCI. These men were carefully lifted onto stretchers and placed on the beach in a long row where they were identified and prepared for burial. It was a sad sight the men of the 341 would never forget. These were men with whom they had chatted and joked only a few hours before.

The commander of LCI Flotilla Seven finally contacted Lt. Rolf and let him know that his men would be taken off the beach the following night by LCI (L) 224. He explained that the 341 crew would have to endure a



night in the jungle. One of the officers, Ensign Norman E. Wallin, took some men to the arms locker on the 341 and passed out all the weapons and ammunition they had aboard. The crew then retired to their foxholes.

Gunners Mate Mack slung a Thompson machine gun over his shoulder and fastened a .45 caliber hand gun to his waist with extra ammo. Said Gunner Mack, "We dug fox holes...because all night long there were air raids coming over bombing the area where we had landed. Just dug and got out of the way of anything being blown away there. I stayed in there with LT Wallin. He had the fox hole next to me and another ship mate of mine was on the other side. We three were very close together there all night long. Of course there was snipers. You could hear individual shots during the night. You didn't want to lift your head up to find out where they came from. "

Gunners Mate Leonard Ruffin remembers, "We made trips back and forth to the ship for things we needed." This was done only during the day as the officers did not want any trigger happy sailor shooting an imaginary Japanese infiltrator. It was a long restless night as every shadow and every sound was a sinister Japanese soldier seeking to kill a sailor.

Morning's light brought smiles to the whole crew as they realized that they had survived and been a part of something rather remarkable. They were sailors yet here they had dug fox holes and prepared a line of defense just like infantrymen. Here they were sailors yet they were now technically qualified for a combat infantry badge. They knew if they could survive they would have some amazing stories to tell their sea going buddies back in Pearl Harbor.

As the day wore on the skipper prepared his men for their departure that night. He made sure all the service records of the men were safe and handed them to an enlisted man to care for. When the LCI (L) 224 could be seen approaching the beach the skipper asked for two volunteers to stay with him as he was going to stay with the ship. Promptly two men raised their hands. After a few minutes the crews had all shook hands with their buddies and joked and laughed and said their "see ya later's."

The men of the 341 stood at the railings of the 224 and watched their ship and their skipper fade into the blackness of night as they drew further and further away. Next stop for the crew of the 341 was Australia. All felt it was a lucky break.

A month later the crew of the LCI (L)-341 was reassembled and told they were going back to Lae with a repair crew that was going to refloat the battered LCI and patch her up. She was to get a new job as a rocket ship.

After a few days at sea the men could see their ship resting in the same place she had been before but things around the ship had changed dramatically. There were US Army troops everywhere and tents and bull dozers and all sorts of equipment. It was rather impressive. And there was the LCI (L)-341.

Upon reaching the shore, the crew immediately asked about their skipper and were told some horrifying news. GM1/c George Mack remembers that they couldn't believe when they were told where to find the skipper, "He was buried about ten or twenty feet into the jungle with a few other Americans. That was just a temporary grave in there, and they had a cross marked up there with his name on it." The men came singly and in groups to look at the cross," remembers Mack,

This is the story the crew learned of the death of their skipper: A month before the crew arrived to retrieve their ship, Lt. Rolf and the two crewmen who had volunteered to stay behind, began burning the deck logs, secret and confidential records and the navigational documents. As they were doing this, there were frequent bombing raids. On one of these raids, splinters from a bomb riddled the body of Lt. (j.g.) Robert W. Rolf. He died shortly thereafter.

It was a blow still remembered by the crew well into their late eighties. George Mack relates, "You know I





***Lt. (j.g.) Robert W. Rolf
Winner of the Navy Cross for his service
aboard LCI 341***

think of the skipper now in the back of my mind. We weren't together too long. That was our first big initial landing after making a long trip across the sea. He was just a young, young fellow, small of stature as I recall. I was tall and skinny. He seemed to be short and skinny. But he stayed right with the ship until the end."

Lt. (j.g.) Rolf's actions and leadership were well reported by his men and officers. The Navy Department contacted his mother a few months later and informed her that her son was posthumously being awarded the Navy Cross and that they had decided to name a Destroyer Escort after her son. They invited her to attend the commissioning ceremony in Orange, Texas, which she proudly attended with her family.

The picture of her family at the ceremony is telling. There are loving family members present as well as his proud but obviously mournful mother, and just over her left shoulder is a young lady with a huge smile and bright face. It is a Miss Lillie Belle Boumans, a young lady whom Lt. Rolf had met when he reported to the Orange, Texas shipyard to pick up his brand new LCI the 341. They had met and fallen in love. Now there with his family, she stands bringing obvious strength to a family that is hurting. Her love had come full circle. She had fallen in love with a man and a year later she was in the same shipyard with the man's family sending off a ship with his name displayed on its side. It was just another amazing story from an amazing time.

Sources:

- 1) Action Report LCI (L)-341
September 16, 1943-
Declassified
- 2) Oral History: George J. Mack
Jr. GM1/c LCI (L)-341 Nov. 26,
2008
- 3) War Memoir: Leonard J. Ruffin
GM2/c LCI (L)-341



***Christening Ceremony of USS Rolf
Lady in front row with flowers is Robert Rolf's mother
Lady in white hat is Lillie Belle Boumans***



DON'T MISS THE REUNION!

MAY 13—17, 2009

Please see the tour descriptions and information on the Red Lion on The River, Portland, in the last issue of *Elsie Item*. For you who may have misplaced the registration blanks, here they are again.

Wednesday, May 13

1:00 pm—6:00 pm	Reunion Registration open
1:00 pm	Hospitality Room open throughout the reunion (Cash bar available)
	Ship Tours available aboard LCI 713
7:30 pm—8:30 pm	Welcome Reception in the Hospitality Room

Thursday, May 14

8:00 am—9:00 am	Reunion Registration open
9:30 am—2:00 pm	COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE CRUISE (description follows)
3:00 pm—5:00 pm	Reunion Registration open
3:00 pm	Affiliates Meeting

Friday, May 15

8:30 am—9:00 am	Reunion Registration open
9:30 am—2:30 pm	CITY TOUR / PEARSON AIR MUSEUM (description follows)
4:00 pm—5:00 pm	Reunion Registration open
5:30 pm—10:30 pm	DINNER CRUISE (description follows)

Saturday, May 16

9:00 am—11:30 am	Business Meeting for the men
9:00 am—12:00 pm	LADIES GARDEN TOUR (description follows)
1:00 pm—2:00 pm	Memorial Service
5:30 pm—	Cash Bar Reception
6:30 pm—	Banquet

Sunday, May 17

Farewells & Departures

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY FOR ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less the non-refundable AFR registration fee (\$7 per person). Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less the non-refundable AFR registration fee. Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm Eastern Standard Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion. Canceling your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.

TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE CRUISE

Thursday, May 14

Experience the true wonder of the Columbia Gorge. Cruise on the historic Columbia River Scenic Waterway aboard the Columbia Gorge Sternwheeler.

It's an authentic triple-deck paddle wheeler, providing 360 degrees of breathtaking vistas. During this two-hour cruise, glide past such natural and historic landmarks as Multnomah Falls, Beacon Rock, Bonneville Locks and Dam, and many others—all from the best view on the Columbia.

Enjoy a box lunch while on board, consisting of a sandwich, pasta salad, cookie, and a beverage.

9:30 am board bus, 2:00 pm back at hotel
\$69/Person includes bus, guide, and lunch cruise.

CITY TOUR/PEARSON AIR MUSEUM

Friday, May 15

Not-to-miss sites during a tour of Portland include the Forecourt Fountain, Salmon Street Springs in Waterfront Park, and Pioneer Courthouse Square. Located in the heart of downtown Portland, Pioneer Courthouse Square is affectionately known as the City's "living room." With more than 26,000 people passing by the Square each day, and thousands more visiting the Square directly, it is the single most visited site in Oregon's most visited city.

Enjoy lunch in Nob Hill, a unique community of shops, businesses, and restaurants in Portland.

We'll end the day crossing the bridge into Vancouver to tour the Pearson Air Museum, located on Pearson Field, one of the nation's oldest operating airfields. Learn about all the aviation milestones that have occurred at this small Vancouver field since 1905. Step into our pre-WW II Army Air Corps hangars and immerse yourself in Pacific Northwest aviation history!

Experience the "Golden Age of Aviation," when flying was new to the world and those who flew in open cockpit aircraft, with the wind in their faces, were the ultimate daredevils! Enter the museum and you enter a world of wild barnstormers, experimental aircraft, and aces of World War I and II. Watch a film, see lots of memorabilia, and visit the gift shop.

9:30 am board bus, 2:30 pm back at the hotel
\$35/Person includes bus, guide, and admission.

DINNER CRUISE

Friday, May 15

Head downtown this evening to board the *Portland Spirit*, a 150' yacht with three public decks, two of which are enclosed and climate controlled. Just about the same size as our LCIs—but a bit more luxurious!

The *Portland Spirit* features delicious Northwest cuisine prepared to order in our on-board galley, several full service bars with a vast wine selection, grand pianos with live performers, including singing wait staff, a ship-wide sound system, and a marble dance floor.

Fresh Northwest cuisine, live entertainment and grand scenery—all the ingredients for a memorable evening.

5:30 pm board bus, 10:30 pm back at hotel
\$103/Person includes bus, escort, and dinner cruise.

LADIES GARDENS TOUR

Saturday, May 16

Spring is a beautiful time of year in Portland. Visit the world-renowned International Rose Test Gardens. The gardens boast 10,000 varieties of roses planted on three terraces. Queen's Walk, at the end of the gardens, offers what locals consider the most spectacular view of the city.

Then it's onto the Portland Japanese Garden, located in Portland's West Hills, with five formal garden styles set on five and one-half acres. At the heart of a Japanese garden is harmony with nature. Through the careful use of plants, stones, and water, areas of serene and quiet beauty emerge.

A visit to the garden in May, you'll may find lingering magnolia and cherry blossoms, delicate pieris and enkianthus, budding dogwood, rhododendrons, and vibrant azaleas.

9:00 am board bus, 12:00 pm back at hotel
\$39/Person includes bus, guide, and admissions.

Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

Please plan to be at the bus boarding at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time.

All tours must have a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise noted.

HOTEL REGISTRATION FOR THE 2009 REUNION

RED LION HOTEL ON THE RIVER – PORTLAND, OR (503) 283-4466 or (800) 733-5466

The Red Lion Hotel On The River is located at 909 North Hayden Island Drive, Portland, OR 97217. The hotel is conveniently situated on the scenic Columbia River, 10 minutes from downtown Portland and 15 minutes from the Portland International Airport. The hotel offers 318 guest rooms. Each room features high-speed Internet access, refrigerator, microwave, voicemail, coffee maker and cable. Guests may also enjoy the seasonal outdoor pool and the fitness center. Handicapped are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservation. The Red Lion is a non-smoking hotel, but smoking is permitted on the guest room balconies. Shenanigans is a casual restaurant serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner featuring Continental cuisine with a Northwest twist. Tuxedo Charley's Lounge is perfect for a casual lunch, late night drink or just to relax with friends. Room service is also available. Parking is complimentary. Check-in is at 3:00pm and check-out is at 12 noon.

The Red Lion Hotel does provide shuttle service to and from the Portland International Airport. You will need to contact the hotel by calling (503) 283-4466 upon arrival at the airport. After retrieving your luggage, you will proceed to Island 3 marked Courtesy Shuttles. You may want to make alternate arrangements, since space is always limited on courtesy shuttles.

The Red Lion Hotel does not have parking for guests staying at the hotel with RV's. Should hookups be required, please call Jantzen Beach RV Park at (503) 289-7626 or Columbia River RV Park at (503) 285-1515. Ask for information, reservations, and directions to determine which is best for you. The parks recommend reservations be made immediately due to limited space and availability.

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.

Vendors, Schedules, and Prices are subject to change.

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

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION – HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

REUNION DATES: MAY 13–MAY 17, 2009

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE # (_____) _____ ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEP. DATE _____

OF ROOMS _____ # OF PEOPLE IN RM _____ HANDICAP ACCESS SMOKING NONSMOKING

KING BED 2 BEDS If room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.

RATE: \$119 (single/double occupancy) + tax (currently 12.5%)

Rates will be honored 3 days before and after reunion dates, based on availability.

CUT-OFF DATE: 04/10/09. Reservations received after this date will be processed on space and rate availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is cancelled 24 hours prior to your arrival day. Call (503) 283-4466. Record your cancellation number. Adjustments to departure date after check-in, resulting in a shortened length of stay, may result in a fee. All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit enclosed.

AMEX DINERS VISA MASTER CARD DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (required regardless of payment method) _____

MAIL TO:

Red Lion Hotel On The River • 909 N Hayden Island Drive • Portland, OR 97217

Attn: Group Reservations

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone orders accepted). Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. Returned checks will be charged a \$20 fee. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before April 10, 2009. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
PO Box 11327
Norfolk, VA 23517
ATTN: LCI

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Check # _____	Date Received _____
Inputted _____	Nametag Completed _____

CUT-OFF DATE IS 4/10/09

	Price Per	# of People	Total
TOURS			
THURSDAY: LUNCH CRUISE	\$69		\$
FRIDAY: CITY TOUR / PEARSON AIR MUSEUM	\$35		\$
FRIDAY: DINNER CRUISE	\$103		\$
SATURDAY: LADIES GARDENS TOUR	\$39		\$
MEAL			
SATURDAY: BANQUET <i>(Please select your entrée)</i>			
BRAISED PORK	\$36		\$
APPLE & BRIE CHICKEN	\$40		\$
MANDATORY PER PERSON REGISTRATION FEE			
Includes Hospitality Room and administrative expenses.	\$20		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$

PLEASE PRINT NAME

FIRST _____ LAST _____ NICKNAME _____

LCI # () _____ SPOUSE NAME (IF ATTENDING) _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____ PH. NUMBER () _____ - _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

(Sleeping room requirements must be conveyed by attendee directly with hotel)

MUST YOU BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS? YES NO (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

PLEASE SPECIFY BANQUET SEATING PREFERENCES IF DIFFERENT FROM YOUR LCI# _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER () _____ - _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

ARE YOU STAYING AT THE HOTEL? YES NO ARE YOU FLYING? DRIVING? RV?

For refunds and cancellations please refer to our policies outlined at the bottom of the reunion program. **CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9:00am-5:00pm EASTERN TIME (excluding holidays).** Call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion.

Your Officers and Board of Directors

Please feel free to contact any of the officers or directors listed below for whatever comments or questions you may have. If the person you contact does not know the answer to your question, he will direct you to one that can. We're here to serve you!

OFFICERS

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tab626@cox.net

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717-392-4558
maxeyusn@comcast.net

OFFICES AND SUPPORT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED BY NEHEMIAH COMMUNICATIONS, INC
101 Rice Bent Way, # 6, Columbia, SC 29229
803-865-5665

Please send information or questions about membership, dues payment, address, e-mail or telephone changes to them.

Please send information concerning the death of an LCI shipmate to Jim Talbert

Please send any communications concerning *Elsie Item* to John Cummer

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

If you served aboard an LCI, you are eligible to join our Association as a regular member.
If you are a relative of someone who served aboard an LCI or if you just have a desire to have a part in remembering those who so served, you are invited to join as an Affiliate.

DUES ARE \$25.00 PER YEAR, June 1 through May 31.

Please complete this form and mail it to the address indicated below with your first year's dues.

I. For Application as a Regular Member:

Name _____
LCI Served On _____ Rank/Rate _____
Address: _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail address _____
Date of Birth _____
Occupation or Former Occupation _____ Wife's name _____

Help, please! As a precaution we'd like to have an alternate name and address that we might contact in case we can't reach you:

Alternate Name _____
Address: _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail address _____

II. For Application as an Affiliate:

Name _____
Address: _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail address _____
Date of Birth _____
Occupation _____ Spouse's name _____
My _____ (father, grandfather, uncle, etc.) whose name is/was _____
served on LCI Number _____ (If unknown or if you did not have a relative who served on an LCI, leave blank)
My Occupation _____ Spouse's name _____

Help, please! As a precaution we'd like to have an alternate name and address that we might contact in case we can't reach you:

Alternate Name _____
Address: _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail address _____

Privacy notice: Information solicited in this application for membership will be used only as needed for official business within the Association. No information will be released outside the Association or its agents without the consent of the member(s) concerned

Make Check payable to: **USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

Send Application and Check to:
USS LCI National Association
c/o Nehemiah Communications, Inc.
101 Rice Bent Way, #6
Columbia, SC 29229

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U.S. POSTAGE
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COLUMBIA, SC
PERMIT NO. 487

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, INC.
c/o Nehemiah Communications, Inc.
101 Rice Bent Way, #6
Columbia, SC 29229



LCI @ 65 and sister ships at the Invasion of Morotai

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