



"THE ELSIE ITEM"

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

JULY, 2004

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ISSUE #49



**A VERY SPECIAL THANKS FROM A FRENCH FRIEND
FOR D-DAY'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY**

"THE ELSIE ITEM"

Number 49

July, 2004

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 700 Daniels Avenue, Orlando, FL, 32801.

About the Cover:

His name is Patrick Elie and we first met him face to face in Bayeaux, Normandy, on June 7th.

For some time he had been in correspondence with officers of the USS LCI National Association, expressing his gratitude for what Americans had done to liberate his country in 1944. As our plans for the tour to the D-Day Ceremonies firmed up, he wrote expressing the hope that he and his family could meet us.

That meeting took place in a sidewalk café in Bayeaux. As he sat beside me, he handed me an envelope, saying,

"This is from us to you"

I opened it, and choked up a bit as I read the enclosed card,

"Patrick", I asked, "would you please read this to all of us."

And he did, as shown in this picture



The card is our cover for this issue. It speaks for itself.

A Word from the Editor:



This may be the most unusual issue we've put out yet!

Instead of featuring pieces written by our readers relating World War II experiences we are using most of the pages to bring you pictorial reports of two most significant events in the history of the LCI National Association.

The first pictorial report is of the great reunion we had in Portland; and to that we've added a good look at the restoration work on LCI 713 which was the centerpiece of that reunion. We hope these reports will bring back happy memories for those of you who were there and will inspire all of you to make our next reunion in New Orleans, May 17-22, 2005.

Then we wanted to share with all of you the "once in a lifetime" experience some of us were able to have as we traveled to England and Normandy to take part in the ceremonies surrounding the 60th Anniversary of D-day. It was such an impressive event that it was difficult to whittle it down to size so that we could fit it in this issue. We hope you enjoy this pictorial record of a great event.

All of which means that there is a basket-full of articles for our October issue. We've got such things as a report on how LCI gunners were trained; an interesting excerpt from the official instructions for ships entering Leyte Gulf; a re-visiting of the account of the Battle of Walcheren Island with a different opinion from another former Royal Navy type; a story of a kamikaze scarf which an LCler has had as a souvenir for many years and of its eventual return to the family of the Japanese pilot, an unusual report of how the Roman Army seems to have utilized the idea of an LCI long before World War II . . . and on, and on.

So, stay with us. We'll make it up to you Pacific guys in the next issue. In the meantime we hope that this somewhat special issue with many more pictures than we normally use will be of pleasure and interest to you.

John Cummer

From the Desk of Jim Talbert:



May, 2004. Jean and I have just returned from Portland and one of the best reunions we have ever attended. We had a very nice turnout and everyone seemed to get along great and enjoy themselves.

The trips were outstanding. To see the beautiful Northwest was a very rewarding experience. It has been many a year since I was in that part of the country. The banquet was also a great success. This year we decided not to have a dance after the dinner, but to have entertainment, more of a USO type show, and it was great and so was the music. In fact, it was so good that a lot of people got up and danced on the carpet anyway while the show was going on and it fit right in with the theme of the evening.

Everyone really enjoyed having the 713 there. It has come a long way in restoration. Walt James and his crew have done a great job with her. We were a bit disappointed that he could not dock her at our hotel as planned, but, through no fault of his or ours, he had to tie up at the hotel next to ours. It was a bit much of a walk for some of our members.

The 713 is now in a tax exempt status and is badly in need of funds to continue with the restoration. John has address and information on how to donate to the cause in this issue, so, whatever you can give to the preservation of our history will, I am sure, be greatly appreciated.

At the business meeting I promised I would give you the website of the U. S. Navy Archives. It is: www.navsource.org/archives/10/15idx.htm

If you go to this website and click on your ship's number, you will get a brief history of your ship; however, the web master, Gary Priolo, would like more information and pictures. If you care to contact him to offer him more pictures or information, he can be contacted at gpriolo@navsource.org

Overall, we had an excellent reunion and in my opinion it was one of the best. Of course, there is always a sour note or two. The "free loaders" - guys who are not members and don't pay annual dues like you and I - showed up again. We know who they are and I think that next year I will get mean and announce them by name at the banquet so that you know who they are!

One of our members told me of an unfortunate situation that did come up in the hospitality room. It seems that one of the ladies present did not like the music LCIer Jack Crocker and his family band were providing gratis and proceeded to tell them so. The ladies in Jack's band were so upset that they stopped playing. This was a most unfortunate breach of good manners and we are sorry it happened. I would like to apologize to Jack and his musicians. They are professional musicians who play often for various Veteran's organizations and we are fortunate to have them at our reunions. I would like to suggest that, in the future, if the music is not to your tastes you simply leave. Don't abuse the musicians.

Thanks, Jack, for all of us who do care.

Jim Talbert

LCI 726 DONATES FUNDS TO THE LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

"The bonds of friendship of the crew of LCI 726 are as strong as ever", said Tom Moody of Palatine, Illinois, "but, with declining attendance at their reunions, we have decided to cease meeting, close out our treasury and donate the remaining funds to the LCI National Association."

As a result, over \$300 will be added to the treasury of the LCI National Association.

"We're very appreciative of this generosity and extend sincere thanks to the crew of the 726", said President Jim Talbert, "we will do all we can to be sure that the loyal members of the crew of the 726 have ample opportunity to continue their fellowship as they take part in our national reunions."

"We pledge to make the best use possible of these funds", said Treasurer Tiny Clarkson "and we look forward to continuing our long and pleasant association with the crew of the 726."

Bravo Zulu, 726!

WELCOME ABOARD!

It's a great pleasure to welcome aboard another fine group of shipmates and to recognize some of our regular members who have chosen to become Life Members

New Members

LCI(G) 41	Smith T. Randal, RM3C, Franklin, NC
LCI 89	George H. Berle, S1C, Sunnyvale, CA (Also LCI 323)
LCI 323	George H. Berle (see above)
LCI 440	Harvey "Lucky" Hellene, Pacific City, OR
LCI(G) 449	Edward R. Masher, C.M., Portland, OR
LCI(G) 449	Norman C. Colgate, FN1C, Dallas, OR
LCI(L) 529	Robert F. Stamp, MoMM2C, Lancaster, PA
LCI 549	William E. Thomsen, SM3C, Alto, MD
LCI 636	Michael J. Della Rocco, MoMM 1C, Scotia, NY
LCI(R) 646	Joe R. Fennie, S1C, Northfield, MN
LCI(R) 605	Francis J. Keenan, LTJG, Washington, D.C.
LCI 665	Thomas D. Burns, Boston, MA
LCI 713	Samuel E. Kimpton, S1C, Portland, OR
LCI 732	Norman H. Scheer, LT, Spokane, WA
LCI 951	William L. (Bill) Stoughton, YN3C, Washington Court House, OH
LCI 1016	Thomas Allen, Delray Beach, FL

New Members Joining as Life Members

LCI 21	Joe Ridley, QM3C, San Dimas, CA
LCI 492	Thomas B. Mayes, SMCS, Smithfield, VA
LCI 545	Thomas S. Gordon, Westminster, MD
LCI 633	Thomas R. Shelton, RM1C, Tilden, TX

Regular Member Changing Status to Life Members

LCI 43	Donald J. Ragno Palo Alto, CA
LCI 67	Kenneth S. Fread Ruthven, IA
LCI 463	Manuel C. Perez Sacramento, CA
LCI 606	Henry Levine Lakewood, NJ
LCI 707	Leo A. Wise Downey, CA
LCI 1000	Earl J. Mandley Dunwoody, GA
LCI 1012	John Disponzio Jamaica, NY
LCI 1027	William G. Poisson Grand Rapids, MI
LCI 1059	James A. Nance Carlsbad, CA

New Affiliates

LCI Unkn	Dr. Jolene Oppawasky, Residence unknown
LCI 416	Lance D. Caputo, Olympia, WA. Son of Francis L. Caputo (Also LCI 556)
LCI I 556	Lance D. Caputo (see above)

Letters to the Editor

Our first letter gives us yet another glimpse into those bloody days in February, 1945, when the LCI gunboats of Group 8 went in before the invasion to protect the underwater demolition teams.

July 1, 2004

Dear Mr. Cummer,

I have been reading Letters to the Editor ever since getting the *Elsie* publication. Now I think I should offer one.

In February 1945 I was a member of LCI(G) 452 in Group 8, Flotilla 3. We were assigned to work with Underwater Demolition Teams for the invasion of Iwo Jima.

The Engineering Officer of our ship was a close friend of the Engineering Officer of the 449. We had already anchored when the 449 came by. We did not have any fresh spuds. Because our Engineering Officer was on duty in the conning tower, he used the megaphone to call over and ask if they had any surplus spuds. The reply was affirmative and that they would send some over.

They dropped anchor near us and as a result their anchor cable went under our ship. You guessed it. The cable caught our propellers and bent the shaft. Because of this our ship was put out of commission. As a result the 449 was assigned to replace us on the line going into Iwo. We, of course, had to go into dry dock to be repaired.

I am sure that all of you LCIs as well as the Navy knows what happened during the invasion. The 449 lost twenty one crew members who were killed in action and seventeen who were seriously injured. The Captain, Rufus Geddie Herring, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism.

I have always felt that it was fate that the 449 took our place during that invasion.

It haunts me to realize that there, but for the grace of God, my immediate shipmates and I would have been listed in those fatalities and injuries. I pray for all members of the 449 and honor their courage and patriotism.

John J. Wilkes, LCI(G) 452
34 Apple Blossom Lane
Danbury, CT 06811-4939

... and here is yet another about the great typhoon

May 8, 2004

Hi John,

I should have written this earlier. I just thought someone else would, but it seems as though I am the only one from LCI(L) 1084. I can't find anyone else.

This is more about Typhoon Louise. We were coming back from Shanghai on our way back to Leyte when we ran into this typhoon. We were the first to send a message to Guam.

LCI(L) 800 was with us but they turned and got out of the storm in about two hours. Our Captain was afraid to turn so we rode with the storm all night. I was P.O. of the watch.

We lost our mast, our stern anchor and our starboard screw. Our last message was an SOS; then we lost all radio contact.

I said, "I hope those welders in Bay City were good!" It was like riding a bucking broncho.

LCI(L) 800 got to Leyte two days before us.

The Navy wanted to scuttle our ship, but our Captain told them that he had brought it over and he was taking it home.

LCI(L) 800 then towed us to Pearl Harbor. Of course, we used the port screw. We got into dry dock at Pearl Harbor and got another screw.

With no mast and no stern anchor we dropped anchor at San Pedro Bay one year and one hour from the time we cast off from San Diego.

I made this as short as I could. Could hardly write any more. Sure would like to hear from someone who was on LCI(L) 1084.

Arthur T. Watt
108 E. Grove Street
Altamont, IL 62411

Here's one from a very proud father who has at least four reasons to be proud!

Dear John,

"Honor thy father!"

The McCarthy boys honored their father, J. E. McCarthy at the Portland Reunion.



The boys, standing, from left to right, are Joe, Dan, Tim and Pat.

They flew in from various parts of the country to celebrate with "J.E.:" and, after meeting with several members, came to the conclusion that "J.E." didn't win World War II all by himself!

It was a great honor for all.

Jim McCarthy, LCI 685.
California State Director

June 30, 2004

John P. Cumber, Editor
"The Elsie Item"

Hi John;

I would appreciate it if you could get this printed in the "Letters to the Editor" column in the next issue.

To all former United States Coast Guard LCI(L) crew members who served in LCI(L) Flotillas 4, 10 or 35:

The Coast Guard Historical Department would like you to send in your memoirs, photos, letters and any other items of interest related to your experiences serving aboard the LCI(L)'s in these flotillas.

Address them to:

Scott Price
2400 North 16th Street
Arlington, VA 22201

For additional information Scott may be reached by e-mail at Sprice@comdt.uscg.mil

The items and information you submit will be exhibited on the Coast Guard web site.

Thank you

Paul Masatelli, LCI 324
pjm32159@aol.com
Telephone: 352/750-2462

OHIO LCIers TO MEET

Ohio State Director James J. Aydelotte, has announced that Ohio LCI members will meet for a state reunion in Dayton, Ohio, August 4 and 5, 2004.

The group will tour the Air Force Museum in Dayton and will gather for a dinner meeting with a speaker. Further details will be available from Jim who is composing a letter to the 55 LCI National Association members who live in Ohio.

Jim invites any LCIers who may be in the area to join the Ohio group for this first meeting. He may be reached at the following address:

James J. Aydelotte
5635 Coach Drive East, Apt. A
Dayton, OH 45440-2773

PORTLAND 2004 REUNION , AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS

Record Number attend 13th Reunion, May 10-22, 2004



President Jim Talbert, Treasurer Howard "Tiny" Clarkson and their wives Jean and Janet had plenty of reason for the big smiles on their faces as they attended the Portland Reunion! Attendance was at a near all-time high of 503; the facilities at the Doubletree Jantzen Beach hotel were outstanding; the LCI 713 was parked just outside the door; the beautiful Northwest provided an outstanding array of tours and the banquet, by all measures, was one of the best ever!

Local Arrangement Chairman Rod Scurlock and a hard-working crew from the Northwest pulled all the stops out to make certain that everyone went away wishing it would last longer. For those of you who were not able to make it, we present here a photographic record of this outstanding reunion. Because the 713 was such a special part of the event, we're making that the subject of a separate article in this newsletter.



The Hospitality Room

Of course the Hospitality Room was the scene of joyous reunions, much laughter and re-telling of those sea stories which never grow old.

And right there in the middle of it were **Jim McCarthy and Leroy Olsen**, still pitching those great LCI Calendar.

World War II Airplanes, Cheese and a Logging Camp



The first of our tour took us to the Tillamook Air Museum, the Tillamook Cheese Factory and Camp 18, a logging museum with restaurant.

Roy Age, Jim Talbert and David Cox expressed strong approval for the nose art on this bomber. The Tillamook Air Museum is housed in a World War II blimp hanger, reputedly one of the largest free-standing wooden structures in existence.

A cheese factory sounds like a strange choice for a tourist stop, but, as we learned, the Tillamook Cheese Factory has a well-deserved reputation for their products and visitors have the opportunity to see how those products are produced – and there are free samples!

Porter Biddleman, enjoys an ice cream cone at the Tillamook Cheese Factory.



Roy Age, Jack Ring, Aubrey Wilson and James Lorah try out the Camp 18 Logging Museum bar, reputed to be the largest ever made from a single log.



Up the Colombia River Gorge and an Evening Dinner Cruise

It was a beautiful ride along the gorgeous Colombia River, but, as **Mark Reynolds**, LCI 438, discovered, the fog took away a lot of the beautiful view.



Lovely Multnomah Falls is one of the finest of the scenic attractions in the Colombia River Gorge.

Aboard the *Portland Spirit* veteran reporter **Bill Ringle** of McLean, Virginia who served aboard LCI 968, regales his table with a story, no doubt from his day of hobnobbing with the movers and shakers in the nation's capitol.



And the Grand Finale - A Great Banquet!

Our speaker was retired **Rear Admiral Robert B. McClinton** who, as a Midshipman, was assigned to an LCI for one of his summer cruises. He bonded instantly with his audience as he described how he has never forgotten the experience of trying to bunk down in one of those crowded troop compartments.

A native of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Admiral McClinton had a distinguished career aboard battleships, cruisers and destroyers, capping it with major commands - CTF 73, Sixth Naval District, and Naval Base, Charleston.

Now a resident of nearby Sequim, Washington, he is an avid long-distance bike rider and yachtsman who currently races a Pearson 36 sloop.



String of Pearls, a World War II style big band with a talented trio singing all the old Andrews Sisters hits, was, without a doubt, the best banquet entertainment we have ever had.

The music had more than a few of the LCIs and their wives on the floor dancing like they were nineteen and at the USO again!

John Busher, LCI 579, was an enthusiastic and talented participant when the "Andrews Sisters" cajoled him into joining them for one of their numbers.

He put on some moves that brought the house down!





Carrie Caffee, Portland, Oregon, one of the LCI 713 crew of reenactors **rewards George Wratten** for the dashing figure he cut in his dress whites!

George, a resident of New Carlisle, OH, served on three LCIs - the 365, 988 and the 1052.

Carl Chapple proudly poses with the winner of the raffle for the LCI model which he built and donated.

The winner was **Susan Dow** niece of John Hentz who was a shipmate of Carl aboard the 451.

Since the model which Carl built was of a bow door LCI, Susan plans to donate it to the crew of LCI 713.

A record-breaking \$900 was raised in the raffle for the model. Carl generously builds fine models and donates the proceeds to the LCI Association.



Jack Braden of LCI 801 was proud to display the tattered remnant of the U.S. flag which flew above his ship sixty years ago.

Admiring the flag are (left to right) **Walt James, Jim Talbert, Admiral McClinton, Jack Braden** and "Chief of the Boat" for the 713, **Chief Bilbo**.



NOW . . .

CAN WE TOP ALL OF THIS NEXT YEAR IN NEW ORLEANS?

Earl Carmichael Remembers D-Day

With all of the coverage in this issue of the 60th anniversary of D-Day it seems only right to listen, for a moment, to some of the men who were there.

First, we hear from Earl Carmichael, Crescent, Oklahoma, who was a member of the crew of USS LCI 85, one of the LCIs sunk by enemy action on that day.

Then, on page 33, you can read the first-hand account of Peter Fantacone who was aboard the 492 in the same flotilla with Earl.

Recently, Earl recounted some of his experiences to his local newspaper and we are privileged here to share what he had to say with you. After telling his readers about some of the names and lingo used in the Navy and what life in wartime England was like, Earl speaks movingly of what it is like for a sailor to lose his ship:

To any sailor, the most devastating command that you can get is the order "Abandon Ship". This command will haunt you for the rest of your life, for it is a very emotional time. When you see your ship go down you realize that you have lost all of your personal belongings, except what you are wearing and you do realize that you were very much in harm's way. However, what hurts you most is that you have lost your ship, of which you were very proud. While a ship is many tons of steel and is not a living thing, you do develop almost an affection for it as it has survived storms, invasions, air raids, heat, and cold. It's especially hard if you were a "plank owner", or original crew member when the ship was put into commission.

We had sailed LCI 85 for over 65,000 nautical miles. Sailors never use the pronoun "it" or "he" when referring to their ship. It is always referred to as "she". I think this is because, deep down, sailors love their ships.

What I am most proud of is the fact that on D-Day in Normandy on Omaha Beach, our ship was shelled heavily, hit a mine, and caught on fire twice; yet, what was left of our crew stayed with a burning and sinking ship until we off-loaded all of our wounded and most of our dead.

While common sense tells me that after sixty years my old ship probably lays in a crumbled condition on her side and

covered with rust, barnacles and drifting sand in deep waters off the shore of Normandy, I like to think that she is setting upright, with her flag still flying proudly and her guns still pointed upwards to ward off enemy airplanes. I like to think that the sun's rays are shining on a bright and gleaming ship of which I am very proud to have served.

Some things you just never forget.

Elmer Carmichael

Vancouver Production Company Plans LCI Video

Galadriel Productions, a Vancouver-based producer of documentary videos, is preparing a mini-documentary of the 2004 LCI National Association's annual meeting, plus footage of LCI 713's journey from its home on the Willamette River to the Colombia River Doubletree Jantzen Beach hotel.

All proceeds will go to fund a one-hour LCI documentary to be presented to PBS, The History Channel, and Oregon Public Broadcasting for possible airing.

To obtain a copy, please contact Galia Herdman at 360/ 944-6284 or by email at Rahshine@aol.com. The mailing address is Galadriel Production, 11412 NE 49th Street, Suite I-3, Vancouver, WA 98682.

Cost of a VHS tape will be \$15.00 plus \$5.00 shipping. A DVD will be available for \$25.00 plus \$5.00 shipping.

Note: Galadriel Productions is an independent production company and is not associated with the LCI National Association in any way. This notice is being carried as a service to Association members who may wish to obtain a copy of the video.

Did LCIs Really Need Screen Doors???

by

Robert M. Morris

(LCI 1026)

Santa Barbara, CA

Another wacky story from the LCIs!

In late May, 1944, I completed "Ninety-Day Wonder" school in Chicago, was commissioned Ensign and given orders to report to the Receiving Station, Portland, Oregon, after a few days leave in southern California. My assignment was as Communications and Commissary Officer aboard LCI(L) 1026, then under construction at the Albina Engine and Machine Works yard on the Willamette River in Portland.

On the train north from Los Angeles, I met Ensign Joe Shulman, my counterpart on LCI(L) 1027. I think it is fair to say that neither of us had much practical knowledge of ships or shipbuilding, so we decided to pool what limited knowledge we had by sharing a hotel room in downtown Portland, not far from the shipyard.

At the Portland Receiving Station we were given further orders and provided with vouchers for hotel and meals and instructed to report to the shipyard daily, armed with check lists to see that all the required equipment was aboard at the time of commissioning and sailing. Memory is a bit dimmed after all these years, but I believe Joe and I had about two weeks to be sure everything was ready for sailing and for the arrival of the other officers and crew a day or two before departure.

Each day after breakfast in the hotel, Joe and I would walk the five or six blocks to the shipyard, passing through Portland's red light district on the way. Although neither of us would have admitted it at the time, we were more than a little uneasy as we were accosted by women provocatively dressed. We tried hard, and probably unconvincingly, to act worldly and disinterested.

The people at the shipyard were cooperative with our snooping around, carrying check lists and crossing out items as we found them aboard. Although I have long forgotten the specifics, I am certain I had to ask yard workers several times what a particular item was and what it looked like so I could check it off my list. It might have been something

like an exhaust fan for the Charlie Noble. I suspect the yard workers often wished we would just go away, but they also knew that this was just one of those things that had to be tolerated when a Navy contract was involved. I have no criticism of Albina Engine and Machine Works personnel and, after going to sea on one of their creations, I came to have real respect for the quality of their work, but not necessarily for the Navy's ship designers.

Our two ships were given camouflage paint jobs and were supposed to have screen doors fitted on the three outside entrances to the deck house. Yard people claimed that this was because we would be going to the tropics somewhere. I doubt that the yard people really had a clue about where we would be going and I also doubt that even the Navy had such information at that time.

I was able to check off every item on my list except for the three screen doors. I was hesitant to certify that all was ready when the time came to sail down the Willamette and Colombia Rivers, but I finally agreed to sign after making a note about the missing screen doors. I was assured by the local Navy people and the shipyard that the screen doors would be shipped to San Diego, our next port, and would be installed there.

When we got to San Diego, no screen doors appeared, so I started another inquiry and was put off several times with various excuses while we did our shake-down, trained to beach and retract, and to dock without damaging either the ship or the dock. This practical training lasted about five months and involved many beaches at Coronado Strand, San Clemente and San Nicholas islands; degaussing, and even one actual landing of about 200 Army troops at an isolated beach near San Luis Obispo in the dead of the night. This army group was a simulated invading force charged with evading a defending force hiding in the nearby mountains. We never learned the results of this "invasion", but it did take us a couple of days to clean up the mess in the troop compartments left by a lot of seasick soldiers.

Every few weeks, when we were in port, I would raise the question of the missing screen doors with the Supply Depot people and would be told "They're being shipped" or words to that effect. After about five months of this, the supply people finally said that the screen doors had been shipped to Pearl Harbor and would be fitted there. I was pretty well convinced by then that the screen doors would never come, but, amazingly, none of the Navy people even once hinted that I should forget the whole matter or that Biceps, or whoever decides such things, had concluded that we didn't need screen doors.

JIM CUSHING MEETS THE QUEEN!!

He was one proud former Royal Navy LCler!

Jim Cushing of Boston, England, has become a special friend of Tiny and Janet Clarkson as a result of their hosting him at our LCI National Association Reunions in years past.

And he had some very special news to share with his American friends as a result of his experiences at the British Ceremonies at Arromanches, on June 6th, celebrating the 60th Anniversary of D-Day.



Jim's shot of the Queen approaching

As the ceremonies concluded, Queen Elizabeth walked past the veterans, stopping to chat with several and to express her thanks to them for their sacrifices for their country.

Jim felt fortunate to have a place in the first row and, as the queen proceeded down the row, made certain that he got a picture of her as she approached.

Then, to Jim's great surprise she stopped right in front of him and struck up a conversation with him. An alert official photographer captured the moment and made a point of seeing that Jim received a copy of the print.

A most pleased and proud Jim Cushing was eager to share the photo and the good news with his friends. Knowing that Jim had made many friends in the LCI National Association during his visits with us, Tiny and Janet thoughtfully sent the photo on to us to be shared with all of our members.

The *Boston Standard*, daily newspaper in Jim's hometown heard of the honor paid to their local son so made sure they had an interview with him upon his return home.

Jim's most recent visit with us was in April, 2003, when he attended our Washington, D.C. reunion.

We thank Jim for sharing this very special experience with us.



A very proud Jim Cushing chats with the Queen while other veterans look on.

I might have made a career out of hunting for screen doors for LCIs, but about Christmas time, 1944, I was transferred to LCI 631, then being converted into a mortar ship, in Long Beach. I knew even less about mortars than about ships, so naturally the Navy made me the Gunnery Officer.

During the ensuing two years of my duty in the Pacific, I never once saw an LCI with screen doors.

It was a small introduction to the wonders of Navy bureaucracy!

E-Mail Changes and Corrections

Ship No. Name/Correct E-Mail

- | | |
|------|--|
| 27 | Maconi, Richard C.
Maconirc@bellsouth.net |
| 41 | Randal, Smith T.
Randols@d-net.net |
| 325 | Trifoso, Bernard J.
Btrifoso@yahoo.com |
| 373 | Divincenzo, Albert
adivincenzo@wowway.com |
| 430 | Polasek, Preston F.
Manager@clatskanie.com |
| 529 | Stamp, Robert F.
robertstamp@granderiver.net |
| 633 | Shelton, Thomas R.
rosalie@grandriver.net |
| 646 | Fennie, Joe R.
bandjoe@charter.net |
| 1054 | Frederick, Richard H.
richfred2@bellsouth.net |

Researchers Looking for Contact with Veterans

Associate member James C. Bunch, Floral City, FL passes on to us information on three different researchers seeking contact with veterans:

WWII COAST GUARD AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS VETERANS

Author/Researcher is seeking to contact Coast Guard Veterans of World War II who were involved in Amphibious Operations.

Contact: Mike Walling
99 Fort Meadow Drive
Hudson, MA 01749-3138
Telephone: 978/562-9872

SEEKING WORLD WAR II PACIFIC VETERANS

Researcher is seeking to contact World War II Veterans who served in the Pacific Theater.

Contact: Frank Nappi
2 Massachusetts Avenue
Massapequa, NY 11758-3845
Telephone: 516/541-1787
E-Mail: fnap33@aol.com

SEEKING AFRICAN-AMERICAN VETERANS

Author desires stories, etc., from African-American Veterans of all wars and their families for a book.

Contact: Lisa Daniels
3516 43rd Street
Sacramento, CA 95817-3732
Telephone: 916/455-5816
E-Mail: sweetiepiepress@aol@yahoo.com

Mark it on Your Calendar Now!

2005 LCI National Reunion

May 17-22, 2005, New Orleans, LA

"Let the Good Times Roll!"

The Centerpiece of the Portland Reunion! A Pictorial Report on the 713



With few exceptions, the first thing LCIers looked for when they arrived at the Portland Reunion was the 713, the LCI undergoing restoration by Walt James and his crew of volunteers. Although we were disappointed that it could not be docked directly at the Doubletree, Jantzen Beach (due to previous commitments of the docking space to a cruise vessel), it was only a short walk next door to where she was docked and all who saw her agreed that the walk was worth it. To be aboard an LCI again, to feel the steel decks under your feet again, was a real thrill.

For all of you who were not able to make it to Portland, we thought it appropriate to give you this photo report on what she is looking like - and what yet has to be done.



Three shipmates from LCI 407 and the son of one, inspect the newly-installed binnacle in the Conn.

Left to Right: Peter Little, son of David Little and 407 crewmen Chick Mason, David Little and Manny Lebovitz



The work done in the pilot house is impressive indeed.

With this picture you can now explain to your grandkid what you mean when you say that we had a "streetcar control" instead of a helm!

Top side, one of the most recent additions, thanks in good measure to the work of former-Quartermaster Rod Scurlock in the flag bag.

Effort is now underway to find an appropriately sized set of flag to complete this project.



Descending the ladder from the pilot house, one sees the interior of the main deck house where the most extensive restoration work has been done.

Looking aft one sees the passageway to the fantail with the hatch opening to the crew's quarters under the ladder from the conning tower.



The restorers have been able to locate one table for the mess deck and are looking for others. LCIers will recall that the tables were fixed to the bulkhead and hinged in the middle so that they could be folded up when the space was needed.

On the table are a signal lamp and a ship's bell which will soon be installed.

The Officer's Wardroom is so complete that all it needs are about three young junior officers sitting there drinking coffee!



Another recent addition are the bunks in the Officer's cabin opening off the mess deck.

Below, in the crew's quarters, some lockers and bunks have been installed as the search goes on for more to complete this restoration.

They have not yet found one of those infamous "Kerrick Steam Generators" which, supposedly, was to supply heat in the crew's quarters but in actuality pumped clouds of blue diesel fumes into that confined space!

Of course, you Pacific types wouldn't know anything about heaters in the crew's quarters, would you?



Restoration Director Walt James shows off the engine room as it appeared before any work had been done on it. The rust and deterioration seen here is what the entire ship looked like when Walt first acquired it. Since the reunion, significant progress has been made on the engine room restoration.

Motor Mac will recognize the engine order telegraph dial on the bulkhead. Walt is standing in the approximate position of the engine room watch station.

"The next step in restoration will be the really expensive ones," says Walt. "If we were, for instance, to acquire engine, the Coast Guard would then view the 713 as an operating vessel and will have a ton more of regulations and inspections for us."

Walt also pointed out that before the 713 could ever get under way on her own power, a dry-docking and considerable hull work would have to be done. So sailing may be a dream for the future, but there are many other things that can be done to make the 713 even more of a proud representative of the ships on which we served.

Efforts are being made to obtain backing from governmental sources in the Portland area with the objective of having the 713 join with an LST and possibly other amphibious vessels to establish a permanent museum where the public could be informed of the role amphibious vessels played in World War II.

To this end, the AMPHIBIOUS FORCES MEMORIAL MUSEUM has been chartered as a vehicle to solicit support for the restoration project. Anyone desiring to keep informed about the progress on the 713 can log on to a recently established website www.geocities.com/afmmproject.

"No contribution is too small", said Walt, "and if any LCler wishes they can send contributions to the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum, 10270 SW Boone's Ferry Road Portland Oregon, 97219.

As all LClers who boarded the 713 at the reunion can testify, the work accomplished to date by this dedicated band of volunteers is impressive indeed. It merits the support of every LCler.

“Enough Memories to Last a Lifetime” LCI Shipmates Relive their D-Day Experiences

It's hard to describe it without using superlatives.

For eight LCIers and members of their families, the opportunity to participate in the ceremonies marking the 60th Anniversary of the Normandy invasion was truly a once in a lifetime experience.



And here's the crew that made the trip, gathered in front of the Regency Hotel, London about to take off for Portsmouth and on to Normandy :

FRONT ROW (left to right): Joseph Dumenigo, LCI(L) 568, Somerset, MA; Nicholas Sgammato, LCI(L) 537, Ossining, NY; John Gatton, LCI(L) 96, Louisville, KY; Dr. Michael Chirigo, LCI(L) 497, Potomac, MD; Lloyd M. Spahr, LCI(L) 615, Mechanicsburg, PA.

BACK ROW: (left to right): John L Dobreff, LCI(L) 493, Westland, MI; Howard B, "Tiny" Clarkson, LCI(L) 537, Troy, NY; John Cummer, LCI(L) 502, Orlando, FL.

These LCIers were joined by Dr. Chirigo's wife, Mary; John Dobreff's wife Betty; Joe Dumenigo's wife Alice; John Gatton's son Michael; and Lloyd Spahr's brother Carl.

Tiny and John's Excellent Pre-Tour Adventure!



As a young sailor sixty years ago, Tiny "became acquainted" with "The Wagon and Horses", a pub in Lymington, the small port near the Isle of Wight. Sentimental soul that he is, he desired to re-visit this scene of his youthful escapades, so contacted his friend Roy Ellis, Past-President of the British LST and Landing Craft Association, who now lives near Lymington, and asked if he could possibly set up a "photo-op" to get his picture taken by the old pub again. Roy not only agreed to do that but laid on a reception that proved to be one of the highlights of the entire tour for Tiny and John Cummer who was graciously included in the invitation.

So what did Roy do? Nothing except call in about a dozen other members of the LST and Landing Craft Association to join in hosting us to a tour of a magnificent estate and enjoy high tea on the veranda of Exbury House, the ancestral home of renowned English Financier Edmund de Rothschild!



It was a most significant place to visit on the anniversary of D-Day for, during the War, Exbury House was commandeered by the Royal Navy, re-named *HMS Mastodon* (nicknamed "the Stone Frigate") and used to train Royal Navy amphibious forces. "The Arromanches Monument" commemorates this service.



Mr. de Rothschild and his gracious daughter hosted the group to high tea on the veranda. Tiny expressed our thanks by presenting him with a D-Day Commemorative Medal and a copy of our LCI Volume II book.

The Tour Begins

Finally getting our feet on the ground (and our head sizes back to something resembling normality), Tiny and I were glad to welcome our shipmates as they arrived on the afternoon of June 2nd.



That evening Ambrose Tours hosted us to a welcome reception and dinner at our hotel, the Regency Hotel in Queensgate.

We were joined by a larger group participating in a longer tour which included battlefields from Normandy to the Rhine. Most of that group were younger people so our group was somewhat lionized as veteran



We heard the first of two lectures from Ronald J. Drez, author of a new book entitled *Voices of D-Day*. Ronald, in the course of pursuing living history interviews as part of his research at the National D-Day Museum under the direction of Dr. Stephen Ambrose, unearthed several first-hand accounts which added immeasurably to the understanding of the events of that momentous day.

Copies of this book were given to each tour participant.

Reminders of Wartime London

The next day, June 3rd, was set aside for getting our heads and hearts aligned once again to what it was like in wartime London. The locales selected to do this were Churchill's War Rooms, St. Paul's Cathedral and the Imperial War Museum. Our knowledgeable guide kept us well-informed of other things to be seen in always-fascinating London (did you know that "Big Ben" is not the familiar tower, but a bell inside the tower?) but his emphasis was on the experiences of the British people as they went through the blitz.

Winston Churchill's Wartime Quarters

The first place we visited were the underground headquarters for the British Government during the war.



I think we were all impressed with the crowded spartan quarters in which the highest level of wartime officials operated during those days. Unfortunately the glass protecting the exhibits and furnishings made photography difficult, but here are a couple of shots to give you an idea of what the area was like.

This is Churchill's bedroom and sitting room, suitably rigged so that he could work in bed late at night as was his wont.

This impressive display of the medals and decorations awarded Winston Churchill reminded us of the immensity of his service to the entire world as he, in John Kennedy's words,

"marshaled the English language and sent it into battle".



St. Paul's Cathedral



Most of our generation will recognize this somber and dramatic picture of the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral taken during the blitz. Its survival became a symbol of the tenacity and bravery of the English people as they endured the worst of punishments night after night.

It did survive and, in the process, became even more beloved of the British people.

Walking through its soaring spaces and seeing names on tombs and memorials that are part of the glorious past of England - Admiral Lord Nelson, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Kitchiner, the poet John Donne ("... ask not for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee") - is an awesome experience.

Some of us wanted to stay to take communion in the cathedral but our tight schedule just would not permit it.

And so, it is a lift to the spirit to balance the "blitz" picture with this bright and shining modern photo, taken from almost the same angle.

It is a concrete statement that courage, determination and faith can triumph over evil.



But the somber must be balanced with the whimsical - so here is a wonderful shot of the redoubtable Tiny smelling the roses in the courtyard of St. Paul's Cathedral!

I'm including it only because he promised to "stomp" me if I did! Sorry Tiny, the temptation was just too great!



The Imperial War Museum



It may have been over saturation of senses and/or emotion, but, as the final stop on our day of exposure to wartime London, the Imperial War Museum did not impress me as much as I thought it would. This in spite of seeing billboards all over southern England advertising their special D-Day exhibits. I'm sure it must have been me and not the museum, because everyone I talked to before or after our visit said they thought it was great.

Giant 15-inch battleship guns from a vessel of the first World War era dominate the front entrance to the Imperial War Museum.

The central atrium of the museum is crowded with weaponry from WWI and WWII.



The D-Day Museum and Tapestry



With images of wartime London fixed in their minds, the group boarded their tour bus and, after a stop at the RAF Museum in Herndon, made their way to Portsmouth for further significant visits and, on the fifth of June, to board the ferry for Normandy.

In 1066 when William the Conqueror invaded and subdued England, the event was memorialized in an impressive tapestry, now in the Cathedral at Bayeux. This tapestry was the model for one made in England after WWII to commemorate D-Day. It is housed in the D-Day Museum in Portsmouth where we enjoyed a visit. Though no photographs are allowed, someone in the LCI group, who shall remain nameless, was unable to resist the temptation when he came face to face with a panel that showed LCIs!



... and at the museum, Tiny met his old friend, Don Kensley, President of our sister organization, The Canadian Combined Operations Association, resulting in an invitation to join the Canucks for a World War II "Sing-Along" and to lift one together that evening. John Cummer, taking his assignment as Tiny's bodyguard seriously felt it his duty to go along. There's pretty good evidence that he enjoyed himself also!!

The Map Room at Southwick

Next day, the LCIers crowded two events into their schedule before boarding the ferry for Normandy. The first was the famed map room of General Eisenhower.

On a high hill overlooking the bustling home of the Royal Navy, sits Southwick House, ancestral home of the Thistlethwayte family which was requisitioned by the Royal Navy in 1941 as a training base. In 1943 it became the headquarters for senior allied commanders as they refined plans for and directed the invasion. The LCIers could not help being almost overwhelmed with a sense of history as they were given the privilege of standing in the very room where the invasion was commanded.



The LCIers visit the famous map, set exactly as it appeared on D-Day

Left to Right, John Cummer, John Dobreff, Joe Dumenigo, Nick Sgammato, Lloyd Spahr, "Tiny" Clarkson, Dr. Michael Chirigos, John Gatton and Lloyd Spahr's brother, Carl.

HMS VICTORY



Though not connected with World War II (except that it did suffer minor damage from a German bombing raid), it was not possible to think of going to Portsmouth without seeing what is undoubtedly the most famous ship in the world.

If you have read any of Patrick O'Brian's stirring novels of Royal Navy sea life in the days of the Napoleonic Wars, or if you have seen the recent film *Master and Commander*, based on O'Brian's novels, you will know why a visit to those famous decks was imperative.

So, you can imagine the waves of shock and anger that went over me as I went to purchase my ticket to see *HMS Victory* and was told that the ship was closed to visitors due to some function aboard!

As I was peeling myself off the ceiling, our tour guide, efficient Mike Herman (whose watchword was "Don't Worry!") set out for "higher authority". He found that authority in the personage of a retired Royal Navy Chief Bos'n's Mate now a civilian employee of the ship. His plea had something to do with ancient warriors who, in their youth had come to England to save that nation from Hitler.

At any rate, it worked for the word came back to us that, although there was an important luncheon aboard honoring major supporters of the *HMS Victory* restoration, if we would wait a few minutes until that group adjourned to the lower orlop deck to eat, we would be given our own special tour. And, to top it off, out came Lieutenant Commander Frank Nowosielski, Commanding Officer of *HMS Victory* to apologize personally and to be sure that we knew we were most welcome aboard. "No one deserves to see *HMS Victory* more than you men who fought at D-Day", he said.

And we were all very grateful and most impressed. Cameras were not to be used, but here are a couple of photos from their website which will give you some idea of what we saw:



This Carronade fired a 68 pound shot



The Great Cabin where Lord Nelson lived

Remembering the Longest Day



This time it was a late afternoon/evening crossing on a luxurious ferry, enjoying a fine meal with the seas as smooth as a mirror to be greeted by busses which took us to the equally luxurious Hotel Normandy Barriere in Deauville.

Could there possibly have been a greater contrast?



It was a bright, clear morning as we began making our way to the place where the ceremonies were to be held. Helpful soldiers spotted Tiny with his cane and offered a ride in a golf cart. Naturally, I had to accompany him, so we arrived early and were escorted to seats on the platform about six rows back of where President Bush and Prime Minister Chirac were to speak. On his way to his seat, the Secretary of the Army, stopped to greet us and chat with us for a while.

A short distance away we saw actor Tom Hanks, who refused to give interviews, saying that he was there only to honor the veterans, posing for as many as wanted a picture with him.

Sixty years ago we lurched across the English Channel on our small, crowded, flat-bottomed LCIs to be greeted by a well-entrenched enemy who did their best to blast us out of the water.

Then the big day began with a 3:30 A.M. wake-up call, boarding our busses at 4:30 A.M. and a three hour drive through the French countryside to the American Cemetery overlooking Omaha Beach. Such early times were necessary because of the immense crowds and the concern for security with the heads of state of many nations in attendance. We saw French gendarmes posted on every bridge.



The long wait did not really seem that long as we visited with other veterans and swapped stories of our D-Day experiences, with French and American military bands filling the air with stirring music.

Finally President Bush and Prime Minister Chirac arrived, laid the wreath and, side by side, took the long ceremonial walk over the red carpet to the podium where we all waited.



President Bush spoke first, paying fulsome tribute to the men who gave their lives on D-Day.

The words of both men were eloquent and moving. We sensed that there was a genuine desire to pay tribute to the men who had made the ultimate sacrifice on those beaches to save the world from Fascism.



There also seemed to be a desire on the part of both to provide some healing from recent breaches and disagreements. Prime Minister Chirac seemed genuinely moved when he said, "We can never repay the debt we owe to these men. Your sons buried here are our sons, too."



As the ceremonies concluded, both men mingled with the veterans for a long time, seemingly reluctant to bring the emotional time to a close.

We were proud, humbled and sobered as we thought of our lives after D-Day, made possible by the sacrifice of the men whose graves surrounded us.

Bayeaux - A Wonderful Finale



The pageantry, speeches and solemnity of the June 6th celebrations gave way on June 7th to a day of emotional closeness, comradeship and celebration as we journeyed to Bayeux where ceremonies had been planned to present badge to D-Day veterans.

Many such ceremonies had been set up and veterans were asked to choose the site they preferred. We had chosen Bayeux, partly so that we could see its beautiful, historic cathedral. It turned out to be an excellent choice.

A system had been set up for registering for the badges in advance via email, but, unfortunately, all of our group of LCLers did not get registered.



The Normandy Badge presented to veterans

Bayeux was also the place where we had agreed that we would attempt to contact our friend Patrick Elie (see cover story). In a wonderful bit of good fortune, Patrick spotted us just as we were sitting down for a quick lunch at a sidewalk café. With Patrick was his wife Beatrice and his son Marc. Tiny won Marc's affection immediately when he presented him with an assortment of amphibious pins.

The Elies accompanied us as we explored a bit of the lovely city and made our way to the town hall where the badge presentation ceremonies were to take place.



Patrick and Marc pose with their new American Friends



John Gatton made friends with a bemedaled British Veteran



Tiny, his new friend Marc, and Beatrice Elie



The Mayor of Bayeaux presents Tiny with his Normandy Badge

Ambrose Tours wound up the adventures with a sumptuous banquet in a palatial chateau that night, but the day in Bayeaux with friends, new and old, was for most of us a fitting climax for our Normandy experiences.

Another day of sight-seeing was planned for June 8th, but as our bus attempted to reach Pegasus Bridge, the site of the famous airborne glider assault, we experienced literal gridlock, so opted instead to head for Paris and our last night there before returning home.



Doctor and Mary Chirigos enjoy a stroll through the colorful streets of Bayeaux



Two old salts and their new friend!

“Enough Memories for a Lifetime!”

Well, perhaps - - but we could probably stand a couple more! So many wonderful things happened and so many delightful circumstances fell into place that we felt truly blessed by all that we experienced.

We were proud to represent the hundreds of LCiers who took part in the invasion but who were not able to be there. Our understanding and memories of those challenging days so many years ago has been enhanced by this trip and we treasure the thought of the hours we will have in recalling these days and these experiences.

AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT TO D-DAY: LCI 492 AT OMAHA BEACH

by
Peter Fantacone,
Mays Landing, NJ

Peter Fantacone reported aboard LCI 492 in late May 1944 in Weymouth, England, just in time for the final preparations for D-Day. We pick up his account with the final events just before sailing for the landings.

Late on the afternoon of June 5th it was announced that there would be Catholic Mass on the docks for all those who wanted to attend. At Mass time the dock was packed with soldiers and sailors so much that they spilled over into the ships. I think every soldier and sailor from those ships was at Mass that afternoon. When the Chaplain gave General Absolution during the Mass, I knew then this was a sure sign that this was not another practice run.

At approximately 1700, special sea detail was set and we got underway. As we left the harbor we sailed past Portland Bill that jutted out into the English Channel. The weather was dull and grey and the sea was rough. We were taking spray over the bow. I looked out as we reached the open sea and saw ships, ships and more ships. There were landing craft, patrol craft, troop transports all breaking through the seas and all headed for France.

I remember that on this trip my stomach didn't feel the greatest because of the rough seas. The flat bottom of the LCI and, most of all, the smell of diesel fumes were the problem. This was because we must have had a following wind and the fumes kept blowing from the stern forward for the whole trip.

After sailing all night, we arrived off the coast of Normandy at about 0330 and began circling in the rendezvous area.

June 6th was a dull, grey day with rough, choppy seas. At about 0500 the battleships *Texas* and *Arkansas* unleashed a tremendous barrage from their 14 and 12 inch guns. The cruisers *Tuscaloosa*, *Augusta* and *Quincy* and other ships joined them in firing at positions on the beach.

I was stationed on the bow of the ship as we circled, manning a radio and listening to communications when the first wave landed on Omaha at about 0630. All I kept hearing on the radio were garbled words such as "easy red" and "fox green" which I later learned were the code names for the beaches where the landings were taking place. Spray was coming over the bow so heavily that the paper pad I was writing on was useless from getting wet.

We landed on Omaha Beach at approximately 0730, about one hour after the first wave. I remember seeing all the wreckage of the equipment burning with smoke covering the entire beach.

The 492 was lucky. Of the twelve LCIs in our Flotilla, four were lost to heavy artillery, machine guns, and mines. The four lost LCIs were the 91, 92, 93 and 85. Two others, the 83 and the 88, were severely damaged. All suffered casualties of both crew and troops. The 85 capsized and sunk. We saw her floating bottom up. She had tried twice to land her troops under heavy fire and hit a mine.

It was hard to believe that just a little more than twelve hours earlier, I had attended Mass and received general absolution with these men who were now casualties.

All tin can sailors can take pride in the way the destroyers swept in close to the beach to deliver needed firepower into the German positions. They dueled with them from late morning into the afternoon. These destroyers were called in to furnish the only direct artillery support the infantry got on Omaha Beach.

Sometime during the day two German planes came out of nowhere and flew so close over us that we could almost touch them. They didn't shoot or drop anything on us and they were gone in an instant.

As the day progressed we started seeing the results of the battle on the beach. Coast Guardsmen in their small wooden craft were all over the rough seas rescuing and recovering the wounded and the dead. We also picked up some survivors and dead from a life raft from a British destroyer that had hit a mine. We also circled an LST, floating bow up after hitting a mine.

At the close of the day, two more things made their way onto the scene - German E-boats and German aircraft. The E-Boats attempted to infiltrate the invasion fleet and torpedo ships or lay mines.

The German aircraft mounted an attack after dark. Never in my life will I see as great a display of firepower as I saw that night when approximately 5,000 ships fired their anti-aircraft weapons. It was like a thousand Fourth of July Celebrations rolled into one. Tracers made a solid curtain of fire. So much was thrown up that you had to wear your helmet on deck to keep from being hit by the pieces of metal that would fall from the sky.

The display was a fitting end for our D-Day experience. The LCI 492 was still afloat and only our Quartermaster had been slightly wounded. How fortunate we were compared to so many of our shipmates on other LCIs of Flotilla 10.

In Memory of our Departed Shipmates

We pray for God's comfort and blessing on the families of these, our comrades

"We Will Remember Them"

**LCI 28
Thurman W. Witt
Lakeway, TX**

**LCI 29
Robert W. Sweeney
Tamaqua, PA**

**LCI 346
Luther Wells
Decatur, IL**

**LCI 347
Edward McGee
(Residence Unknown)**

**LCI 360
Jim Martin
Lee's Summit, MO**

**LCI 366
Jasper Moore
Lafayette, LA**

**LCI 372
James Grim
San Antonio, TX**

**LCI 373
John W. Andrews
Lorain, OH**

**LCI 373
Joseph A. Guglielmetti
Providence, RI**

**LCI 405
Arthur V. McNamara
Branson, MO**

**LCI 442
Paul. C. Miller
Savannah, GA**

**LCI 454
Roy F. Harnden
Ormond Beach, FL**

**LCI 454
Curtis N. Smith
Wayland, MI**

**LCI 456
Jack E. Bean
Noble, OK**

**LCI 469
Harry W. Meyer
Lakewood, NJ**

**LCI 487
William S. Wray
Greenlawn, NY**

**LCI 490
Samuel L. Sargent
Gilford, NH**

**LCI 516
William C. Smith
Blairsville, GA**

**LCI 538
J. Keaton Landis
Warsaw, IN**

**LCI 588
Thomas Garvey
New City, NY**

**LCI 622
William H. Scott
Kihei, HI**

**LCI 645
Donald T. Bishop
Greenfield, IN**

**LCI 648
John P. Creedon
Bethlehem, PA**

**LCI 651
Cecil A. Burton
(Residence Unknown)**

**LCI 651
Charles Whitman
Southport, CT**

**LCI 653
William E. Bryan
New London, PA**

**LCI 658
Emil Pongratz
Sioux Falls, SD**

**LCI 728
Edward R. Seaver
Sun Lakes, AZ**

**LCI 730
Carl Robinson
Englewood, Co**

**LCI 751
Charles R. Cornelius
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**LCI 758
Wesley C. Sholes
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**LCI 948
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LEYTE GULF VETERANS REUNION PLANNED FOR FT. LAUDERDALE. OCTOBER 4-8, 2004

As announced in the last issue of the newsletter, the Broward Council of the Navy League of the United States is planning for reception ceremonies and ship visitation for all veterans who took part in the battle of Leyte Gulf.

"We're hoping for a good turn-out from members of the LCI National Association," said Leo Janetis, LCI(G) 68, a member of the Planning Committee, "because there were so many LCI involved in that action."

The Broward County Council of the Navy League has, for many years, sponsored elaborate "Fleet Week" celebrations honoring the ship and men of the U. S. Navy. They have special ties with the USS Leyte Gulf because she was commissioned there in 1987. Unfortunately, a necessary dry-docking will prevent the ship from being present for this celebration, but the Captain and many members of the crew will be there.

If you are a veteran of the Battle of Leyte Gulf and would like to be in Fort Lauderdale for this special event, you are urged to contact the sponsors at this address:

Broward County Council
Navy League of the United States
P.O. Box 39252
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33339-9252

Final details and the schedule of events will be carried in the September issue of *Elsie Item*.

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION FORM

If you are not a member of the USS LCI National Association and would like to join, please complete this form and mail it with your first year's dues as indicated below:

Name: _____ LCI Served On: _____ Rank/Rate: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Date of Birth: _____ Telephone: _____ / _____ E-Mail Address: _____
 Occupation/Former Occupation: _____
 Wife's Name: _____

Dues are \$15.00 per year, June 1 through May 31. Life Membership: \$75.00

Make ☒ Check payable to:

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Send to:

Howard Clark on, Treasurer
 73 Grange Road
 Troy, NY 12180

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