



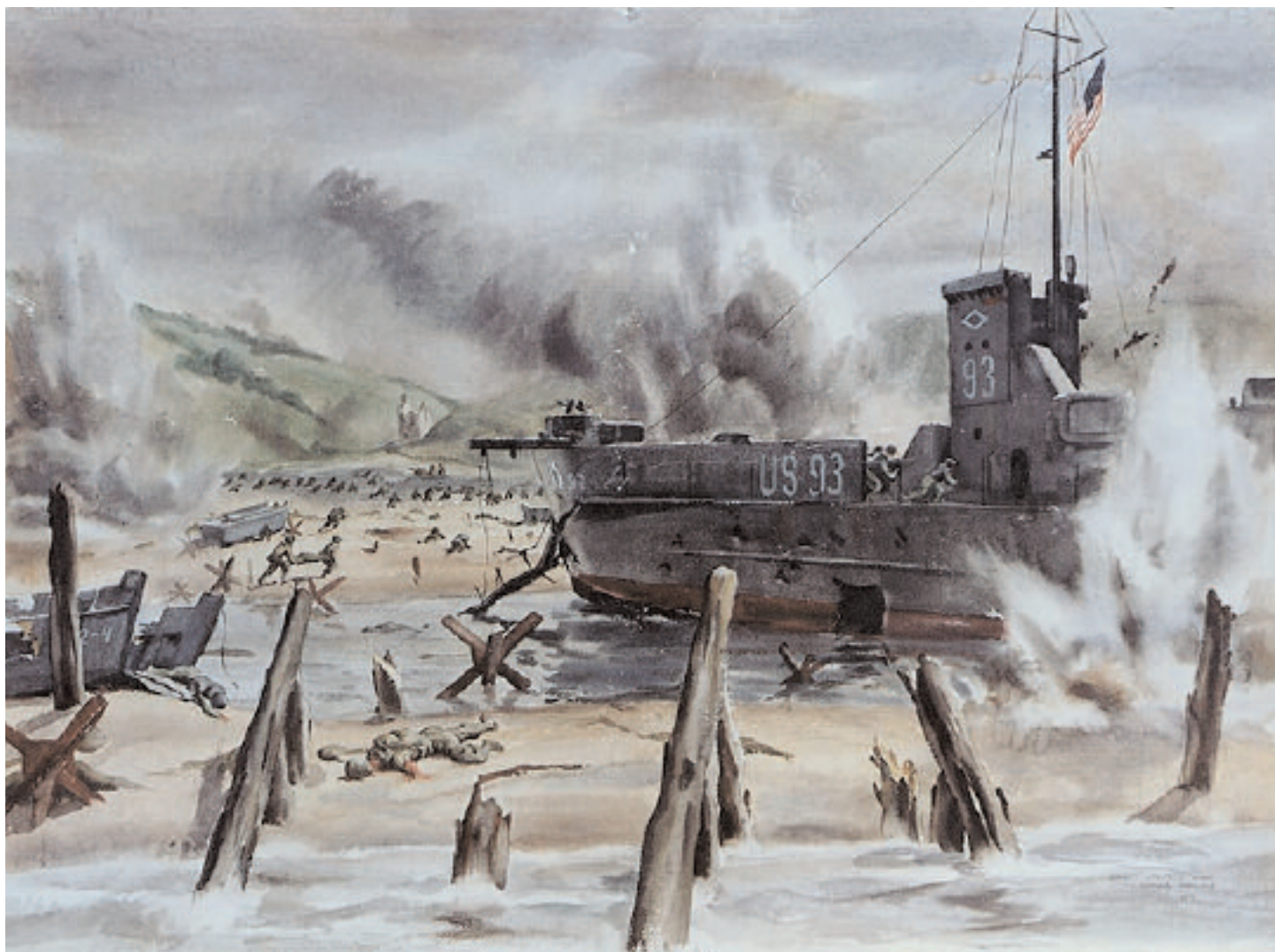
"THE ELSIE ITEM"

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

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

JANUARY 2007

ISSUE #58



IN THIS ISSUE:
SALUTING OUR COAST GUARD LCI SHIPMATES:
FLOTILLA TEN AT NORMANDY:
(See feature articles beginning on page 14)

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION FORMS FOR THE 2007 REUNION
AT BRANSON, MISSOURI, MAY 16-20. PAGES 4-9

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

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

About our cover:

This painting by World War II Navy combat artist Dwight C. Shepler is from the art collection in the Navy Historical Museum at the Washington, DC, Navy yard. Entitled "The Tough Beach," it depicts LCI 93, grounded on a sandbar on Omaha Beach, being subjected to murderous fire from German 88 millimeter guns.

Shepler comments thusly about this painting:

"All day the landing waves suffered terrible attrition from the stubborn, enfilade German fire which raked the shore. A coast studded with beach and underwater obstacles, mines, and German fortified positions and pillboxes, it proved deadly to many American soldiers and sailors on June 6, 1944.

Please turn to page 14 for our feature articles and more pictures of Coast Guard Flotilla Ten at Normandy.

In this issue:

This time we have a good deal of news to share with you concerning our Association as well as the exciting details of our coming reunion in Branson, Missouri. You'll read of the encouraging response to our appeal for donations from Life Members and the overwhelming approval of our proposal for a dues increase. You will also be interested in learning of the progress in talks with the LSI group about the possibility of joint reunions in the future.

And . . . not forgetting the delight and interest we all have in sea stories of our youthful days aboard LCIs, we've got a good collection for this issue. In addition to our feature articles on Flotilla Ten at Normandy, you'll find some interesting accounts such as that of a "memorable explosion" at Kwajalein submitted by Vaughn Hampton. There are some others we think you'll find interesting also; so sit back, turn the TV off and get ready for a "good read."

The Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum Takes Over Ship's Stores

As a part of our re-organization following the loss of "Tiny" Clarkson, our Ship's Stores – ball caps, miniature medals, etc. has been transferred to the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum, Vancouver Washington, under the leadership of shipmate Gordon Smith. They will continue to service all orders and will be at our Branson Reunion to sell items there.

To honor "Tiny", the ship's stores has been renamed "Tiny's Ship's Stores"

A new order form is on page 30.



Farewell to a Good Shipmate

We didn't think it would be so soon.

In just our last issue we told you of Tiny Clarkson's resignation from the office of Treasurer because of his struggle with cancer. Now, with sadness, we must inform you that our very good friend and shipmate is no longer with us.

Janet called me on the evening of Tuesday, November 28th to tell me that his struggle was over. The last days were difficult so, along with the sorrow of parting, she was relieved that his suffering was over.

Graveside services with full military honors were held on Tuesday, December 5th, at the Saratoga National Cemetery. I was privileged to be there.

It was a bright, clear very cold day. Saratoga National Cemetery is beautiful. Volunteers serve as color guard, firing squad, bugler, etc. They were all men of our age which seemed especially appropriate. They were dressed in uniforms designed for them – dark green with great coats and white duty belts, fur hats with insignia on the front. As we came up to the pavilion, the ceremonial guard was at attention on either side of the pedestal holding Tiny's ashes. One carried the folded American flag clutched to his breast. The floral tribute from the USS LCI National Association, a lovely arrangement of red and white flowers with a blue ribbon bearing our name, was displayed next to the pedestal.

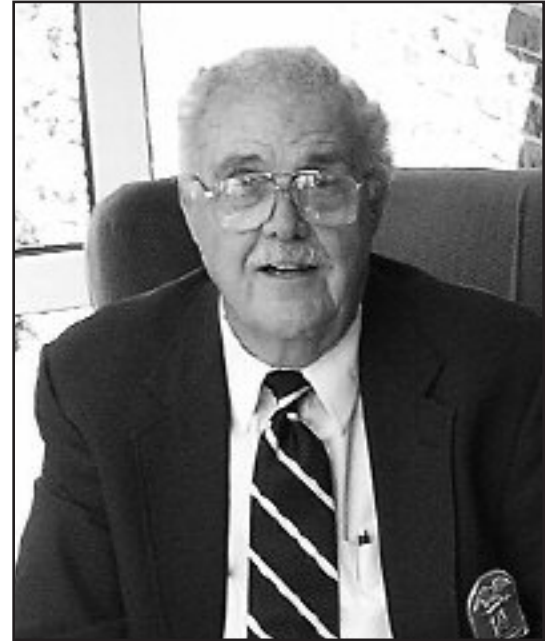
After some comforting and very appropriate word by their pastor, there came the traditional three volleys from the firing squad and taps played by the bugler from some distance away. The guard then carefully and solemnly unfolded the flag, displayed it, and folded it again. As each handed to another he slowly saluted it.

The guard leader then knelt before Janet and presented the flag to her. He told her that it was being presented by the President of the United States in honor of the service her husband gave to his country. As the ceremony concluded, those present approached the urn to pay their last respects. I saluted for all of us.

My Christian faith, which I know Tiny shared, tells me that he is now more vibrantly alive than he ever was on earth. He doesn't need those sticks anymore to support that great frame of his! So our sadness and tears are not for him but for those of us, and especially for his family, who now must do without him for a while.

"Home is the sailor,
Home from the sea"

John Cummer



GET READY FOR BRANSON!



ALL ABOARD THE BRANSON BELLE!

OK, Shipmates, here we go for what promises to be one of the best reunions we've had.

LCIers will cruise aboard the "Branson Belle" and enjoy some star-studded entertainment at the 2007 Reunion, May 16-20, 2007

The beautiful Radisson Hotel in Branson, Missouri, is our destination and an exciting program of shows, excursions, and great opportunities for once again sharing the comradeship of your LCI shipmates awaits you.

For several years our members who have been to Branson have been urging us to hold a reunion there because of the exciting mix of great shows and special attention given to veterans' groups. Now the rest of us who have not yet been there will have the opportunity to find out what they have been raving about!

There were many attractions to choose from, and you may want to take in some others on your own; but we think that the ones we have lined up are among the best. We'll enjoy the Yakov

Smirnoff Theater, a dinner cruise aboard the showboat Branson Belle, visit the Veterans' Memorial Museum, take in the Soji Tabuchi Theater and, while the men are conducting their business session, the ladies will visit Silver Dollar City. Of course, we will also hold our Memorial Service and enjoy a fine banquet followed by very special entertainment! Home grown! Connie Mulherin will organize and direct our very own home-talent LCI Review! See page 26 for more information on how you can be a part of the entertainment scene in Branson!

Of course, the hospitality room will be open throughout the reunion and will offer a fine place for sitting and reminiscing with your friends and shipmates.

The dates are May 16th through 20th and all information and registration forms are on the following pages.

Early registration is urged to be sure that space at the hotel and for all the shows is available!



USS LCI NATIONAL ASSN. REUNION

MAY 16–20, 2007

RADISSON HOTEL—BRANSON, MO

Wednesday, May 16

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1:00pm — 7:00pm | Reunion Registration open |
| 1:00pm — | Hospitality Room open throughout the reunion (Cash bar available) |
| 7:00pm — | Board Meeting |

Thursday, May 17

| | |
|------------------|---|
| 7:00am — 8:00am | Reunion Registration open |
| 8:15am — 12:30pm | YAKOV SMIRNOFF THEATRE (description follows) |
| 1:30pm — 2:30pm | Reunion Registration open |
| 3:00pm — 7:30pm | BRANSON BELLE DINNER CRUISE (description follows) |
| 4:00pm — 5:00pm | Reunion Registration open |

Friday, May 18

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 7:00am — 7:30am | Reunion Registration open |
| 8:00am — 2:00pm | VETERANS MEMORIAL MUSEUM (description follows) |
| 3:00pm — 4:30pm | Affiliates Organizational Meeting |
| 4:30pm — 5:30pm | Reunion Registration open |
| 6:00pm — 10:30pm | SHOJI TABUCHI THEATRE (description follows) |

Saturday, May 19

| | |
|------------------|---|
| 7:00am — 8:30am | State Directors Breakfast |
| 9:00am — 11:30am | Business Meeting for the men (coffee available at 8:30am) |
| 9:15am — 1:00pm | LADIES TOUR TO SILVER DOLLAR CITY (description follows) |
| 1:30pm — 2:30pm | Memorial Service |
| 5:30pm — | Cash Bar Reception |
| 6:30pm — | Banquet |

Sunday, May 20

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 (\$5 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 9:00am until 5:00pm Eastern Standard Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 or email cancel@afri.com to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds are processed 4-6 weeks after the reunion. Canceling your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.



TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

YAKOV SMIRNOFF THEATRE

Thursday, May 17

During this inspiring show filled with patriotism and love of family, Yakov Smirnoff serves up humor for the heart over and over again! The Yakov Smirnoff Theatre offers a fun-filled show featuring “Branson’s Comedian of the Year,” the famous Russian comedian. Sit back while he delivers explosive laughter in a show filled with brilliant special effects, dazzling dancing, heart-felt moments, and just plain fun. The show also features the Russian dance troupe, Neva, and the comedic juggler, Slim Chance. *(Note: breakfast and lunch on your own before/after trip.)*

***8:15am board bus, 12:30pm back at the hotel
\$53/Person includes bus, escort, and show.***

SHOWBOAT BRANSON BELLE DINNER CRUISE

Thursday, May 17

Cruise the waters of Table Rock Lake on board a paddle wheeler, the Showboat Branson Belle. Enjoy a served dinner and great entertainment. The show features a talented cast of singers, dancers, and musicians, who will take you back to the time when showboats were once famous.

***3:00pm board bus, 7:30pm back at hotel
\$66/Person includes bus, escort, and cruise.***

VETERANS MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Friday, May 18

Bring your appetite as we head for a full “all you can eat” breakfast buffet at Golden Corral. Following breakfast, reboard the bus for the Veterans Memorial Museum. This privately owned museum contains over 2000 artifacts in ten display rooms, covering WWI through Desert Storm. For those who lived through these times, the memories brought back are vivid and overwhelming. The hallmark of the museum is the world’s largest war memorial bronze sculpture – over seventy feet in length weighing over fifteen tons! It depicts fifty life-sized soldiers (one from each state) storming the beach. After touring the museum, you’ll have a choice of returning to the hotel at approximately noon, or if you wish you may continue on the bus to Branson Landing, a

new shopping and restaurant complex featuring lots of menu options and stores.

***8:00am board bus, 2:00pm back at the hotel
\$46/Person includes bus, escort, breakfast, and admission.***

SHOJI TABUCHI THEATRE

Friday, May 18

Branson’s hottest ticket is the Shoji Tabuchi Theatre. Enjoy the show that’s become the “talk of the town” as one of Branson’s most delightful family shows. Shoji and his magic violin will dazzle you with practically every kind of music. Listen to country, bluegrass, Cajun, swing, jazz, and even a little Classical music. His wife and daughter will perform as well, and you’ll understand why this is truly a family show.

***6:00pm board bus, 10:30pm back at hotel
\$68/Person includes bus, escort, and show.***

LADIES TOUR TO SILVER DOLLAR CITY

Saturday, May 19

This morning, you’ll have time to explore the re-created 1890’s mining town of Silver Dollar City. It embodies the Branson spirit and brings you back through time to the simpler life style and pace of America and the Ozarks in the 1890’s. Friendly citizens, craftsmen, shopkeepers, and entertainers are waiting to welcome you. The park features over 100 craftsmen and more than fifty shows daily. Lunch options are available. This is the kind of place where you could spend all day. Due to our busy schedule, we only have the morning allotted. We plan to have brochures available at the hotel for you to ‘map-out’ your morning and concentrate on just what interests you.

***9:15am board bus, 1:00pm back at hotel
\$62/Person includes bus, escort, and admission.
Lunch on your own.***

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.



USS LCI NATIONAL ASSN. 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 reservations 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 13, 2007. 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.
322 Madison Mews
Norfolk, VA 23510
ATTN: LCI

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

CUT-OFF DATE IS 4/13/07

| | Price Per | # of People | Total |
|---|-----------|-------------|-------|
| TOURS | | | |
| THURSDAY: YAKOV SMIRNOFF THEATER | \$53 | | \$ |
| THURSDAY: DINNER CRUISE | \$66 | | \$ |
| FRIDAY: VETERANS MEMORIAL MUSEUM | \$46 | | \$ |
| FRIDAY: SHOJI TABUCHI THEATRE | \$68 | | \$ |
| SATURDAY: LADIES TOUR | \$62 | | \$ |
| MEALS | | | |
| SATURDAY: BANQUET <i>(Please select your entrée)</i> | | | |
| PRIME RIB | \$32 | | \$ |
| CHICKEN CORDON BLEU | \$32 | | \$ |
| MANDATORY PER PERSON REGISTRATION FEE | | | |
| Includes Hospitality Room and administrative expenses. | \$15 | | \$ |
| Total Amount Payable to <u>Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.</u> | | | \$ |

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 or email cancel@afri.com to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion.

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK BECAUSE IT IS
THE BACK OF A FORM THAT WILL BE
MAILED IN.

SHOULD A FILLER GO HERE?

RADISSON HOTEL BRANSON
BRANSON, MO
417-335-5767 or 800-333-3333

The Radisson Hotel is located at 120 South Wildwood Drive, Branson, MO 65616. The hotel is located in the heart of the theater district next to the theaters of Andy Williams and Bobby Vinton, and the Grand Palace Theaters. If you are driving, please call the hotel at (417) 335-5767 for accurate driving instructions. The Radisson Hotel features ten stories of beautifully decorated guest rooms, each equipped with a coffee maker, hair dryers, iron and ironing board, electronic key access, clock radios, and in-room voice mail. The Hotel also features an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, hot tub, sauna, and exercise room. Handicapped and non-smoking rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special requests when making your hotel reservation. There is ample free parking available. Check-in time is 3pm and check-out is 12 noon. **Mike Radford's Remember When Veteran's Café** offers one of the area's best breakfast buffets and delicious luncheon specials. They also serve dinner. **The Canteen**, is a coffee shop featuring soups, salads, and sandwiches as well as espresso, flavored coffees, and fruit smoothies. **R & R Bar**, serving your favorite cocktail, beer, or wine in a warm, friendly atmosphere that is uniquely Branson. Full menu service is also available in the R & R Bar. Room service is available.

Three airlines (American, Northwest, and United) service the Springfield Branson Regional Airport. Classic Shuttle Service is an independent shuttle service in Branson offering veteran discounts. Please call 417-698-0227 to make your reservations. The current fare for one way service is \$50 for one person, \$65 for 2 people, \$80 for 3 people, \$25 each for a party of 4-10 people. Airport Shuttle, offers service to and from the airport, current fare for one way service is \$50 for one person, \$75 total for 2 people, and please call for other rates. Please call 417-339-3420 to make your reservations, ask to speak with Kim. Jerry's Shuttle Service current fare from the airport to the hotel for one way service is \$70 for one person, \$90 for 2 people, \$100 for 3 people and \$35 for each additional person. To reserve space please call 417-334-5678. **Reservations need to be made twenty-four hours in advance for all shuttle services.**

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

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

Vendors, Schedules, and Prices are subject to change.

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

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

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

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

ARRIVAL DAY & DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____ # NIGHTS _____

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

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

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK BECAUSE IT IS
THE BACK OF A FORM THAT WILL BE
MAILED IN.

SHOULD A FILLER GO HERE?



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Well, shipmates, the mailbag was really full these last few weeks with all those generous donations coming in from Life Members and the vote on the dues increase issue. Our mailman deserves an extra nice present this Christmas for all the work he's done for me!

Along with all those donations and votes, there were some other letters I'd like to share with you. Here goes!

July 26, 2006

Mr. Cummer:

I am a member of USS LCI National Association, U.S. Navy Armed Guard, The Navy League, American Legion and VFW.

Your newsletter is an outstanding presentation of informative information for veterans. I was so impressed by your newsletter that I forwarded a copy to the U.S. Navy Armed Guard to show them how a newsletter should be put together.

I complement you and your staff on an excellent publication. Keep up the good work.

Anthony Albanese. LCI(L) 191
Granada Hills, CA

Thanks, Anthony! We'll keep trying!

July 12, 2006

Dear John,

I enjoyed seeing the pictures in the latest Elsie Item regarding how we were really dressed. My old shipmate Dick Leisenring's widow sent these pictures to me showing some fashionable South Sea Island dress.

The trio is myself, Harry Hoar and George Dean in various styles of dress.



The other picture shows our Engineering Officer, Mr. Rankin, and our Captain, Norman Steinert, who obviously had no place on his chest to pin his Bronze Star!



These pictures were taken off Bougainville in 1944.

Lou Plant, LCI LCI 24
Livonia, MI



...and here's another one about those crew pictures:

Hi John,

The picture of the crew of LCI 444, in the last issue of *Elsie Item* went over big with family and friends. I like your comment about how these people look like a crew doing its job. We had very short notice to get into our deck gear with a white hat to take a picture. I think it was the first time except for landings that anyone had worn a shirt along with a hat!

We were a very informal group, close to having the same dress code as the natives on the beach.

Take care,

Verlin Creed, LCI 444
Englewood, CO

The story about the stern winch running a washing machine brought this response:

Dear John,

I liked the washing machine story!

On the LCI 237 we had a story, too. Ours started when we were in dry dock in Staten Island, NY, March, 1943. We had no washing machine as Title A property, of course, but we did get the Red Cross people to give us a used one which we lashed to pad eyes on the main deck.

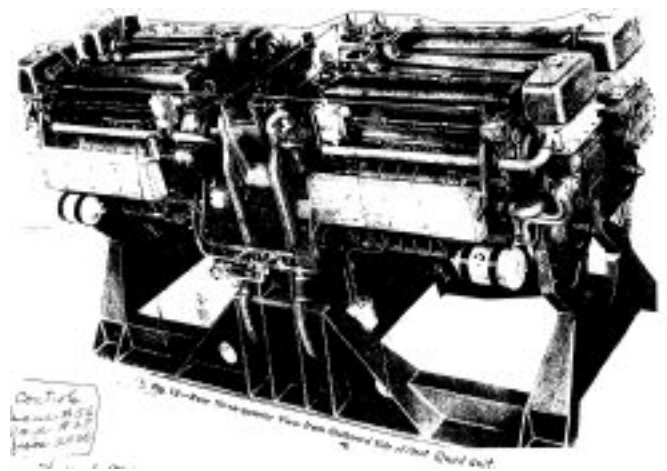
The problem was that the washing machine ran on 120 volts, AC and our old square cons had 120 volts DC. We did not find a suitable motor until we were awaiting repairs for Anzio duty. (In fact, we were late getting to Anzio because of repairs.)

Our use of that washing machine was not for very long as it got smashed by a wave across our stern during a storm. We also lost the German motorcycle we had liberated!

William Patton, MoMM1C,
LCI 237/555.
Temperance, MI

We wish we could print more of the pictures that Harry Salisbury sent, but unfortunately they were not of the quality needed. However, we can share one with you that all you Black Gang vets will probably enjoy seeing.

Harry, now living in Red Oak, IA, had a long career in the Navy before retiring as a Chief Petty Officer. He did his time in the engine room of LCI 226 and shares this picture so that you can show your grandkids (if they'll stay still long enough to listen!) how they could lash four bus engines together to make one "Quad":



“KEEP THE ASSOCIATION GOING!” SAY THE MEMBERS

Vote is overwhelmingly in favor of necessary dues increase

There is no doubt about it—LCIers value their Association and are willing to come to its support when needed.

In the last issue of *Elsie Item*, we described the need for additional funding in order to maintain the newsletter and other services and to replace Tiny and Janet Clarkson with professional services. We asked members to vote on a \$10 per year increase in dues to be able to finance this move, and they responded with an overwhelming vote of “Yes!”

As this issue goes to press (December 27th) 259 votes have been cast and 252 say they favor the proposed dues increase in order to maintain our present level of service and fund the Treasurer’s services. Six members voted to decrease or eliminate services in order to avoid the dues increase. One person said “either way - whatever you want!!”

“This is a tremendous encouragement to continue our efforts to not only keep our Association going, but to improve it in every way possible”, said President John Cumber.

Recognizing that the dues increase might create a financial difficulty for some of our members, Cumber stressed that each and every of our shipmates will continue to be welcomed as valued shipmates even if they are not able to pay the increased dues.

“Arrangements will be made for them to be continued at the former dues level”, he said.

As indicated, ballots will continue to be received until December 31, 2006. A final tally on the vote will be reported in the next issue of *Elsie Item*.

Life Members Respond Generously to Appeal for Contributions

“You can count on us!”

That was the strong response of Life Members to the request for \$25 donations to help maintain the present level of services and to continue the newsletter at its present size and frequency.

To date donations totaling \$9,690 have poured in from 187 Life Members.

“We’re grateful for each and every one of these donations,” said Cumber, “It gives us renewed confidence in the course we have set for our Association and encouragement to keep doing the best we can for our membership”.

One of the most heart-warming donations came from Bill Shoemaker, a WWII veteran of the Royal Navy and a member of the British LST and Landing Craft Association. From his home in Liverpool, England, he sent five crisp, new \$10 bills!

A full list of all donors will be included in the next issue of the newsletter.



DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE WITH LCS(L) GROUP ABOUT POSSIBLE JOINT REUNIONS

Following initial contacts between the leadership of the USS LCI National Association and the LCS(L) group, a committee headed by Director Gordon Smith has been appointed to carry on discussions with a similar committee from the LCS group to explore the possibility of the two groups meeting together for joint reunions in the future.

The LCS(L), as most of you know, was the final “version” of the LCI produced as a gunboat from the keel up toward the end of the war. Their story is told in the excellent book *Mighty Midgets at War* by Robin L. Rielly.

Lessons learned from the conversions of LCIs into LCI Gunboats were applied in designing this ship for the sole purpose of providing gunfire support as needed.

Though it came into the war late, the LCS was judged a great success. So much so that it was continued in the U.S. Navy’s inventory for many years after the war. Eventually, several were transferred to other governments and found service in a variety of assignments. During the Viet Nam war several were used in the riverine warfare conducted by the South Vietnamese Navy and were judged to be some of the best platforms they had for carrying on that hazardous duty.

The LCS Association has been meeting for several years as we have been; but, with smaller numbers to begin with, it is feeling the effect of the advancing years of its members even a bit more than we are.

Early on, in preliminary discussions, it was decided that a formal merger of the two groups would pose too many complicated legal problems, so the plan was to see if we could not hold

joint reunions, realizing some savings because of the numbers involved and still keeping our organizations intact. At reunions, it was felt certain events such as sight-seeing trips, banquets and hospitality rooms could be shared with each group meeting separately for business meetings. Memorial services might also be held together, but this issue is still being discussed.

Chairman Gordon Smith reports that it appears that a positive effort is being made on both sides to bring about such a move but some issues are still to be decided. Chief among differences that would need to be settled is the choice of reunion planners. Since its beginning the LCI Association has used Armed Forces Reunions, Inc, Norfolk, VA, under the leadership of Ted Day and we have been very well satisfied with their services. The LCS group uses a different reunion planner and has similar positive feelings about them.

Another less significant issue to be worked out would be the time for annual reunions. We meet in the spring and they have been meeting in the fall.

At present it appears that the earliest possible date for a joint reunion might be 2009 since we have already scheduled our reunions for Branson in 2007 and Mobile in 2008 and the LCS group has just recently met in Mobile and it is felt that their membership would not like to return to the same city so soon.

As he replied to approaches from the LCS group about possible joint reunions, President John Cummer stated, “I am very much in favor of the idea of possible co-reunions. No two groups of sailors could be closer than LCIers and LCSers. We belong together.”



IN MEMORIAM

*We give thanks for the lives of these, our shipmates, and remember with pride the days of our youth
when they served with us in those small, brave ships.*

May God give them blessed rest and may their families and friends all know His comfort and peace.

LCI 68
Leo M. Janetis

LCI 496
David G. Clark

LCI 728
James Shiel

LCI 81
Elmer R. Metz

LCI 510
Quinton P. Gibson

LCI 783
Robert E. Hall

LCI 192
Robert E. Shuey

LCI 522
Andrew Voytush

LCI 793
Kenneth Erickson

LCI 336
Harry L. Merrill

LCI 537
Howard B. Clarkson

LCI 1008
Roy A. Moore

LCI 348
John N. Dockman

LCI 601
Joseph R. Dunn

LCI 1010
Philip M. Dampf

LCI 349
Brian Lacey

LCI 601
Joseph R. Dunn

LCI 1062
Roger Malm

LCI 353
Herman L. Webb

LCI 638
Thornton Lyford

LCI 1077
Joe D. Kizer

LCI 362
Glenn Majors

LCI 648
John C. Penny

LCI 1084
William W. Blackman

LCI 405
Arthur V. McNamar

LCI 663
James O. Newman



SALUTING OUR COAST GUARD SHIPMATES:

I. FLOTILLA TEN AT NORMANDY



*Members of the crew of LCI 83 pose with a famous member of Flotilla 10, former world-champion boxer Jack Dempsey, who, during WWII served as a Commander in the U.S. Coast Guard. This photo was taken at the base harbor, Dartmouth, England, just prior to the D-Day Landings.
(Photo provided by Leroy Bowen, Colonia, NJ, who served as a radioman aboard LCI 83)*

In the annals of Landing Craft, Infantry one of the greatest stories of bravery and determination is that of the LCIs manned by U.S. Coastguardsmen who stormed ashore with the first wave at Omaha beach on D-Day, the sixth of June, 1944. Four of those rugged square-conns - LCIs 85, 91, 92 and 93 - were lost to enemy action on that eventful day. No other Flotilla lost more ships or men than on that occasion.

To commemorate those brave men and to remind many of our friends and family, who may not know that U.S. Coastguardsmen manned LCIs under Navy control during WWII, we feature a series of articles and pictures which tell the story

of that fateful day. In doing, so we also remember many of those "Coasties" who have been members of our Association for years; and we also welcome aboard others who will be joining us for the first time at our Branson reunion. For years they have had their own Flotilla Ten reunions but have now decided that, with declining numbers, the time has come to join with us.

We are honored to have them and send them a hearty "Welcome Aboard"

We begin this tribute with the official unit citation which was awarded Flotilla Ten in 2000, some fifty six years after the event.



SALUTING OUR COAST GUARD SHIPMATES:

II. The Official Commendation of Flotilla Ten:

THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

WASHINGTON 20593
13 October 2000

The Commandant of the Coast Guard takes great pleasure in presenting the

COAST GUARD UNIT COMMENDATION to:

FLOTILLA 10 - GROUP 29 - DIVISION 57

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For exceptionally meritorious service during Flotilla 10 - Group 29 - Division 57's participation in the allied force's invasion of Normandy, France on 6 June 1944. Consisting of 24 Coast Guard-manned Landing Crafts (LCI), Flotilla 10 distinguished itself in the face of heavy enemy fire in delivering hundreds of allied troops and tons of equipment to Omaha Beach at the outset of the invasion. The gallant efforts of the crews of these LCIs were key to clearing channels through mine-fields and hedgehogs to enable the rest of the allied force to reach the beaches. Although continually exposed to heavy gunfire, the LCIs dodged sunken obstacles and sailed through heavy seas, shuttling between the landing areas and the transport ships delivering badly needed supplies and reinforcements to the beaches. After delivering their human cargo and equipment, the LCIs served as rescue platforms, recovering and transporting injured soldiers and sailors to hospital ships off shore.

Through out the invasion, 4 of the LCIs, Numbers 85, 91, 92 and 93, were lost while distinguishing themselves in the heat of battle. LCI-85 was one of the first to ram its way through sunken obsta-

cles and successfully clear a path to the beach before being hit by an 88mm shell that penetrated the hull and exploded in the forward troop compartment. After unloading troops to smaller landing craft, LCI-85 stuck a mine and was simultaneously struck by 25 artillery shells. Listing badly, LCI-85 returned to [USS SAMUEL] CHASE and unloaded its wounded before it sank. LCI-91 and LCI-92 were both struck by German shells shortly after reaching the beach and both burst into flames. The crews fought the fires while unloading troops. These LCIs burned throughout the day, giving off thick smoke that served as a key landmark for other allied forces approaching the coast. Further down the beach, LCI-93 successfully delivered its first

load of troops, but grounded on a sandbar during their second delivery and took 10 direct artillery hits. As the invasion progressed, the remaining LCIs of Flotilla 10 successfully rescued over 400 injured allied personnel.

These were instrumental in the successful invasion of Normandy and in turning the tide of World War II. The dedication and devotion to duty exhibited by the crew of Flotilla 10 - Group 29 - Division 57 during this period are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

JAMES M. LOY
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commandant



*The number two 20mm gun crew of LCI(L) 85
at anti-aircraft practice
(Note the "Charlie Noble" smoke exhaust stack
disassembled to give a free field of fire)*



SALUTING OUR COAST GUARD SHIPMATES:

III. The After-Action Report of LCI 85,

**by LTJG Coit Hendley, Commanding
Officer**

The History of Flotilla 4 / 10, Group 29, Division 57

The Coast Guard-manned USS LCI(L)-85 was commissioned on 1 January 1943. She was assigned to LCI(L) Flotilla 4. After undergoing shakedown and training exercises, she sailed across the Atlantic in company with the other LCI(L)s of the flotilla and participated in the North African occupation in Tunisia, from 1 June to 9 July 1943. She then landed troops during the invasion of Sicily on 9 July 1943 and the landings at Salerno on 9 September 1943.

She then sailed for England as part of the same flotilla, now renamed Flotilla 10, in preparation for the invasion of Normandy. Her commanding officer was LT(jg) Coit Hendley, USCGR. After undergoing training exercises throughout the spring of 1944, she landed troops on Omaha Beach on the morning of 6 June 1944. She was severely damaged by enemy fire and mines as soon as she landed. Hendley later stated: "The 88's began hitting the ship, they tore into the compartments and exploded on the exposed deck. Machine guns opened up. Men were hit and men were mutilated. There was no such thing as a minor wound." She retracted off the beach and sailed offshore to the Samuel Chase (APA-26) where she off-loaded the wounded before she capsized. She was then sunk with a mine. Fifteen soldiers aboard were killed in action, and approximately 30 soldiers and four of the LCI(L)-85's crew were wounded. Hendley's "After-Action" report reads as follows:

1. This is a report of the action of the USS LCI (L) 85 during Operation Neptune.

2. The USS LCI(L) 85 sank on 6 June 1944 at approximately 1430 about 10 miles off the coast of France as a result of a teller mine exploding under the bow and shellfire suffered while landing troops on the beach assaulted by Assault Force "O". All ship's personnel were saved.

3. LCI (L) 85 arrived at the transport area with the other ships attached to Assault Force "O" and circled in the LCI collecting area until times to make the run into the beach. The ship was scheduled to hit Omaha Beach, sector Easy Red, at K plus 120 which made it at 0830 on 6 June 1944. At 0820 we arrived at the line of departure. The primary control vessel for Easy Red beach called to us by loud hailer and told us to go into the beach at this point. As a result of the strong tide running along the beach, the control vessel had drifted until it was almost past Easy Red beach. We actually landed in the left flank of Easy Red or the right flank of Fox Green rather than the right flank if Easy Red as scheduled.

4. We grounded at 0830 and put out both ramps. The water was too deep for the troops to wade ashore so we retracted both ramps and began to back off the beach. As the anchor was secured, something hit the aft winch causing her to stop running. There were no LCVP's in sight to help unload so we went about a hundred yards to the right and made another beaching.

5. This beaching was made without the anchor as the winch would not start. As the ship grounded a teller mine exploded under the bow splitting the void tank. The port ramp went down and the troops began going ashore. Shells and machine gun fire began to hit us. About fifty troops got down the port ramp before a shell hit it and blew it off the sponsons and over the side. As the starboard ramp had not gone down and the wounded men were jamming the deck, we backed off the beach again.

6. A check revealed that we had approximately 15 dead and 30 wounded men all in the forward part of the ship. We had been hit approximately 25 times by shells. Fire was starting in troop compartments 1, 2, and 3. Water was coming in slow-



ly from shell holes below the water line and the hole made by the mine. No hits had been suffered from the engine room aft.

7. We backed off the beach and stood off about 200 yards. The damage control party began fighting the fire and within 30 minutes had them out. In compartments 1 and 2 the fire had been bunks, blankets, etc. burning. In compartment 3 oil from a punctured fuel tank was also burning.

8. As we were carrying several Army and Navy doctors and our pharmacists' mates, the wounded received immediate care.

9. All but about 30 of the troops that were able to go ashore were sent in by LCVP. We could not get enough to complete unloading, so we proceeded to the USS SAMUEL CHASE to unload the casualties. We went along the CHASE about 1200. We had a bad list from the water in the compartments forward.

10. The damage control party was making an attempt to pump out the water with three Pacific Pumpers but it was not too successful. The strainers on the pumpers would clog up after five minutes running and would have to be cleaned.

11. By 1330 , all the wounded and dead were transferred to the CHASE. We backed away from her and were taken in tow by the AT 98. We had such a bad list that the tugboat captain and I decided to try to pump the water rather than make the beach.

12. The attempt was unsuccessful and the LCI (L) 85 capsized about 1430.

The crew scrambled on board the tug before she went over. She turned slowly on her side and then bottom up immediately. A demolition charge was put in her stern and she then went down completely.

13. Casualties to the crew were four men wounded. These men were placed on the CHASE for treatment.

14. Confidential publications and confidential material on board was on the bridge in a weight-

ed sack and went down with the ship in 14 fathoms of water.

Lt. (jg) Coit Hendley USCGR
Commanding Officer



Battered by shellfire, the badly-listing LCI 85 pulls alongside the USS Salmon P. Chase to unload her wounded.



USS LCI National Association member Elmer Carmichael, now living in Crescent City, OK, kneeling at the mooring bits as the 85 comes alongside the Salmon P. Chase. Pat McGuire holds on to the hand rails.



More Great Crew Pictures!

They continue to come, and , boy, are we happy to see them! It's a great treat to see what vigorous, seaman-like and , let's face it, good-looking guys we were!! (Emphasis on the "were"!) So, we share these with you with pride

To begin with, here's one good enough to be used as Navy recruiting poster!



Clayton Gilmore, who now lives in St. Joseph, Missouri, sent us this one of himself (upper, left) and some of his shipmates from LCI 76. He calls this the "Holy Seven" and says, "I always thought this was real good of us guys- so Navy looking"



Milton Schnitzlein, of Baltimore, Maryland, sent this one of some of the crew of LCI(G) 439. The two guys crouched down are "two Ensigns prior to their becoming shellbacks!"

Here's a pair of photos of the same crew – LCI 736 - just to show you what South Pacific duty can do to an otherwise respectable looking bunch of guys.

Here they are at the time of their commissioning in February, 1944 at Portland, Oregon.



How squared-away can you get?

...and here's the same crew in 1946, taken in Shanghai, China, after the cessation of hostilities, and after the 736 had served with the famed "Black Cat Flotilla" in Peleliu and many other actions.



It looks like the Uniform of the Day was whatever you pulled out of your seabag!



The Great Kwajalein Roi-Namur 1944 Explosion

By
Vaughn Hampton, LCI(G) 450
Arvada, CO



Any man who was around Roi-Namur during that invasion will recall the great explosion that shook the area and created a mushroom like black cloud that momentarily obliterated the sun. LCI(G) 450 was there so it has been of interest to me for many years. *Elsie Item* readers might be interested in what I have found about the cause of that explosion 62 years ago on 1 February 1944.

When I was “found” by the USS LCI 450 crew members in 1996, I inherited the job of the ship’s newspaper editor because I was the only one with a computer. At that time I decided to attempt locating some of the 50 or so Marines we saved from drowning during the Kwajalein Roi-Namur invasion 31 January 1944.

I sent a letter to *The Fighting Forth Marine Division of WW II* editor asking his help in locating any of those marines we saved. He printed my letter and although I received mail from several marines who observed the Amtracs flipping over in the heavy surf, but I did not hear from any of the survivors, so I continued checking various Marine sources and enlisted the help of other marines to no avail.

Then, I happened to check out a library book that explained the Roi-Namur invasion explosion. The book was entitled *Strong Men Armed* and was written by Robert Leckie. While reading it, I found a chapter which told the story of how the humongous explosion was caused by a group of Marines.



Those aboard LCI(G) 450 during that action will recall that we completed our first objective and were underway to the second when the ship grounded on a coral reef and we became observers of the invasion instead of participants. Our ship came to a metal screeching halt. Later that day we were able to save a number of Marines from drowning when their Amtracs flipped over in the choppy heavy surf. I can't recall the day when this big explosion occurred after we grounded and the book doesn't give a date. The Black Gang and those below deck probably heard the loud explosion but wouldn't have seen it unless they immediately rushed topside to see what had happened. The large column of black smoke billowed upwards and outward carrying debris from the explosion center. Our ship's cook, Nick Grosso, mentioned in one of his letters to me that some of the debris fell on our ship but I don't remember that.

Here is the account of the explosion from Leckie's book:

"Shortly before one o'clock Major Charles Duchein was in the rear gunners seat of a Douglass dive bomber roaming the skies above the battlefield giving visual reports to Major General Schmidt's staff. He peered down at Namur's eastern shore, seeing a Marine assault team moving against what seemed to be a giant blockhouse. However, the building was actually a warehouse stuffed with torpedo warheads.

"Lt. Saul Stein led his men cautiously to the big blockhouse on Namur. One of his Marines slipped forward and placed a shaped charge against the side of the building. He ran back and ducked. The blast tore a hole in the side of the building. Out of the hole, out exits suddenly flung wide, came streams of Japanese soldiers. Lt. Stein's Marines were too surprised to open fire. They were not bewildered. They had heard the Japanese were crazy. "Throw in some satchel charges," Stein ordered. They were thrown in!

"Great God Almighty", Major Duchein roared.

He thought he had seen the island disappear and his plane had shot up into the air like a rocket. He peered

into the dense clouds of smoke billowing in all directions below him, and he yelled again to headquarters;

"The whole damned island's blown up!"

"Are you hurt?" Headquarters inquired.

"Wait a minute," Duchein replied, still trying to see land beneath the smoke. "Stand by a minute."

"Is your plane damaged? Where are you?"

Duchein could hear debris rattling off the bombers fuselage, but he breathed a sigh of relief for he had seen land beneath the smoke, and he answered the question.

"I'm about a thousand feet higher than I was but the island is still there."

It was but the warehouse that had held tons and tons of torpedo warheads had vanished completely. Its fragmented remains were still falling on those Marines who crouch in shell holes and craters wondering what had caused that unbelievable rocking roar.

They crouched in inky darkness while whole heads of palm trees, chunks of concrete, bomb and torpedo casings fell from the skies. It seemed an endless rain, and then the smoke drifted away and where there had been a warehouse there was now a great crater filled with water. Lt. Stein and most of his men were dead, though one man who had been blown 150 feet out into the lagoon was found unhurt. There were 40 Marines killed by the explosion and another 60 wounded. A half hour later there were more casualties when the Japanese blew up two other blockhouses."

So, now we know what caused that tremendous explosion the start of February 1944, 62 years ago. I've always thought it was an ammo or gasoline dump hit by shells or bombs.

Now, fast forward to October 2006 when I read the following letter in the 4th Marines 3rd quarter Newsletter:



"During World War II, I was in Battery G, 3rd Battalion, 14th Regiment, 4th Marine Division. At a recent reunion of the 4th Division, I met a veteran who was in the same battalion I was in but a different battery when we invaded the Marshalls. After the introduction, he commented that my battery (G) had several alligators overturn in the surf and the doctor in our group had saved Marines lives. For this action Dr. Ira Hardy received the Navy Cross. I need to set this incident straight.

Log/War Diary that recounted the happenings of the ship grounding and subsequent saving of the marines from drowning that day.

After 12 years of searching for one of those survivors, I finally found one.

Hopefully Roy Hughes will be able to attend our ship's reunion next year.

"During this invasion we were approaching the channel into the lagoon. The Navy lead vessel went too close to the coral reef and several alligators were hit by two gigantic waves. I would have gone overboard when the first wave hit us had not a comrade pulled me back. The next wave overturned us. After I came up and was aware of what happened, I had to swim a long way. A crewmember Art Deer, asked for assistance. He could not swim and his belt was not inflated. I told him to put his hand on my shoulder, which he did. After swimming a little bit, and to my surprise, my feet touched the coral reef and I could stand up. I yelled this information to the rest of the fellows. We gathered at a buoy on the reef when we noticed an LCI stranded on the same reef. I took off walking to the LCI for a better location.

"Upon arrival at the LCI, a sailor tossed me a rope, which I took back to the buoy and tied the rope to it. The rope gave safe guidance to the stranded Marines and one Navel Officer. After the last man completed the journey, I untied the rope and walked back to the LCI. On a lighter note, on my return a sailor gave me a cup of coffee and a cigarette. I told him I didn't smoke or nor did I drink coffee. He replied: "Go ahead, you look like you need both." He was right and I was hooked. The smoking I gave up after returning from the Pacific. This event took place on our approach to a small island in the Kwajalein Atoll on January 31, 1944.

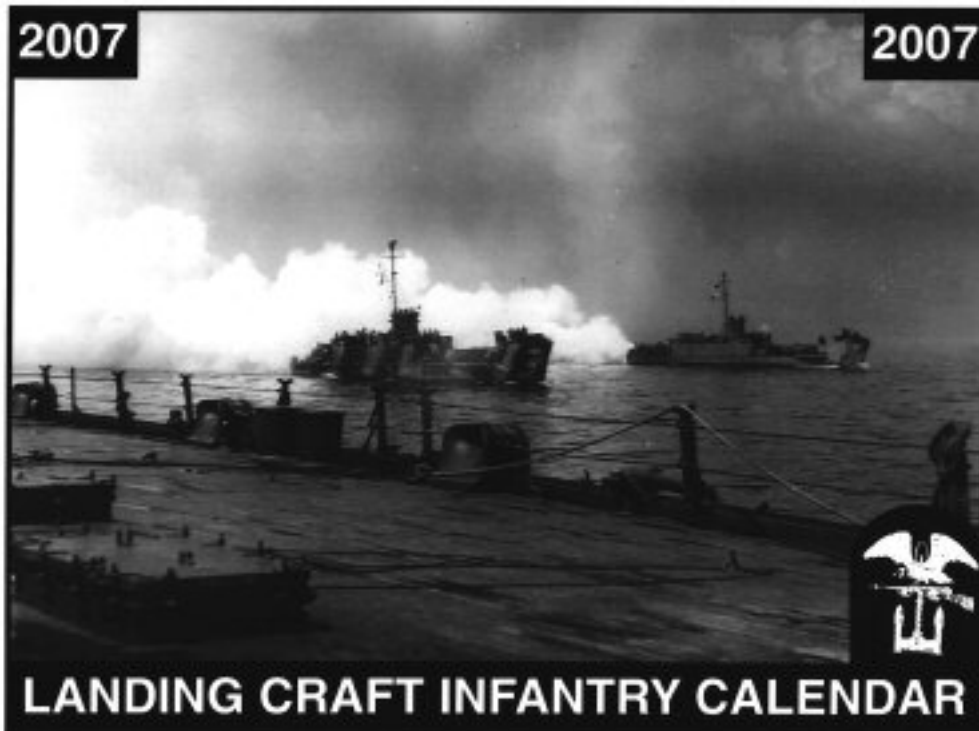
Roy Hughes."

Immediately after reading Roy Hughes letter, I called him in Colorado Springs and we ended up chatting about this incident that happened 62 years and 8 months ago and he was very pleased to be contacted. I emailed him several items about that day including a picture of the LCI 450, a newspaper article about saving the marines and two pages of the LCI 450's Deck





2007 Calendar Now Available!



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

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

2007 LCI CALENDAR ORDER FORM

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

Calendars are \$6.00 each (including tax, mailing and handling)

No. _____

Package of 2002, 03, 04, 05, 06 and 07 calendars available at \$25.00.

No. of packages _____

Amount Enclosed:

\$ _____

SHIP TO:

Name _____ LCI # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

E-Mail Corrections and Additions

Please make the following corrections to your email address collection:

| LCI | Name/Correct Email Address |
|-----|--|
| 23 | William Stark Starkair!@webtv.net |
| 43 | Gordon Smith lohning@aol.com |
| 64 | Betty Jelinek mrpup@charter.net |
| 66 | Graig S. Hawley bdygard@sbcglobal.net |
| 226 | Robert Burns robertburns1234@comcast.net |
| 436 | Robert McLain Maxeyusn@comcast.net |
| 496 | Ben J. Stables golfnut@feg.net |
| 506 | Albert M. Jenney Am170@bellsouth.net |
| 540 | Frank E. France ffrance@sbcglobal.net |
| 656 | Harland C. Marth themarths@earthlink.net |
| 680 | Thomas Brown usnsignalman@verizon.net |

Here's Your Chance to be a Performer in Branson!

How would you like to be able to boast that you were an entertainer in Branson? Well, here's your chance!

For our after-dinner entertainment at our Branson reunion, Connie Mulherin is organizing a sparkling, brilliant, witty review in which you can have a part!

"Over the hill with the LClers" may well be the name of this review, but, based on similar smash-hits that Connie has organized for friends and neighbors in Titusville, Florida, it may very well turn out to be one of the best entertainment features we've ever had.

If you can sing, play a musical instrument, dance, tell jokes, or just get have an urge to get on stage and ham it up for friends and shipmates, you are urged to contact Connie right away and tell him of your availability. Even if you don't have a clue as to what you might do, Connie will come up with something for you that could bring you everlasting fame!

Connie is waiting to hear from you!

Connie Mulherin
1520 Sea Gull Drive
Titusville, FL 32796
Email: Cmulherin1@cfl.rr.com
321/268-1713



Affiliates to Organize at Branson Reunion for More Effective Support, Participation

With the goal of increasing participation and support from our affiliate members, plans are being made for an organizational meeting during the Branson reunion. Sons, daughters, grandchildren, other relatives and friends of LCIers are invited to participate in this organizational meeting to be held at 3:00 P.M. on Friday, May 18th.

The purpose of the affiliate's organization would be to give maximum support and encouragement to LCI affiliate members for increased participation in LCI reunions by working with reunion planners to plan activities especially tailored to them, to give special space and coverage to affiliates and their interests in Elsie Item, to plan for ways in which affiliates would have representatives acting in advisory capacity to the LCI Board of Directors and, in general, to do everything possible to make affiliates feel more a part of the LCI Association.

Because LCI Association By-Laws put restrictions on the participation of anyone other than LCI Veterans in voting, office-holding, etc., it was felt that a separate, but closely related, organization for affiliates was advisable. The affiliate's organization would also provide a framework and resources to carry on with remembering LCIers and their contribution to the victory in World War II after the veterans themselves have passed from the scene.

Roger Gray to Serve as Organizing Convenor

Remembering the enthusiasm and talent shown by Roger Gray in assembling and staging an excellent exhibit honoring his grandfather's service on LCI(G) 454, at the 2004 reunion in New Orleans, LCI Association officers offered him the role of Organizing Convenor. In reply to the invitation, Gray emailed:

"I've taken some time (all of 5 minutes) to seriously think this through. Here's my answer: YES! I'd love to! It has been my desire to "keep the dream alive" since the beginning."

Roger and President John Cummer are presently compiling a survey to be sent to all affiliate members seeking to determine the level of interest and willingness to accept leadership roles in organizing an affiliate's organization. Results of the survey will be used in planning the Branson organizational meeting.

All affiliates are urged to contact Roger to let him know of their interest and to pass on any ideas they may have on the structure and function of the new affiliate's organization.

Interested affiliates may contact John Cummer (address on Officer's page) or Roger as follows:

Roger A. Gray
2104 Delvin Lane
Austin, TX 78728
Telephone: 512/351-0804
Email: roger_a_gray@yahoo.com



SMALL SOMETIMES AIN'T SO SMALL!

Let's Reach Out to our Old Shipmates

By
Rod Scurlock

In the small town of Payette, Idaho, there is a 93 year old WWII LCI Pharmacist I, Don Donaldson, sitting in his easy chair in an assisted living home. He has no brothers or sisters. He has no children and his wife passed away in 2001. Even though he seems to have very good care at the facility, his life is made up of reading the local newspaper each morning, going to meals, and watching TV the rest of the day. Every day he wakes up, this is the life he looks forward to.

Gordon Smith picked up on his name, and in conference with Jim Talbert, we located him. He had never heard of the USS LCI National Association. One day last spring, my wife and I stopped in when we were passing through Payette and visited with him for a short time and brought him a copy of the *Elsie Item*. He was eager to know about the organization, and Jim said he would get him on the mailing list for the magazine.

This week, four of us LCI members from Boise took the trip some sixty miles to take Don to lunch. We presented him with a National Association cap which he put on and wore proudly while we were there. We left him back in his room with a smile on his face. For that day, maybe for the week, and maybe even for longer, Don has some memories to break up the same old routine that he faces every day.

The point I want to make is this: It doesn't really take a lot of time out of our schedules, or cost a lot of money to take a few minutes to get with a buddy and spend some time that might just mean a heck of a lot to him. We, who are more fortunate, still have a lot of things to make our days interesting, and we have people that we love to interact with, but some of our compatriots, like Don, do not.

Hal Bleyhl, his wife Florence, George Menhorn, his wife Susan, Leroy Olson, my wife Ruth and I spent about three hours, maybe a few dollars each, to make a buddy's life a little better for a while. In ten minutes, we won't miss the money, we won't think about the loss of time, and Don may have some memories that will help fill his days for some time to come.

Gordon Smith goes to visit his daughter, who is seriously ill, some sixty miles away in Eugene, Oregon, each week. He makes it a practice to drive a few miles out of his way each time to visit Association members who may need a little cheering up.

A small gesture on our part can be a large chunk of happiness to one of our less fortunate compadres.

A calm sea to all of you and a following wind!



ONE UNIFORM...THREE GENERATIONS!

How's this for proof of the durability of those uniforms we were issued back in 1944!



Fifteen years later, his sons Randy (left) and Ron (right) try the same uniform on, ... and it fits



But it obviously looks much better on his granddaughters Kristin (left) and Erin (right) in 2005 when they take their turns at trying it on!

Jess Kreisel, LCI 330, looked pretty sharp and so did his soon-to-be wife, Ruby In his dress blues in 1946



Tiny Clarkson's Ship's Stores

Order Blank

(Revised, 1 January 2007)

| ARTICLE | DESCRIPTION | PRICE | NUMBER | TOTAL |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------|--------|-------|
| Gold Amphibious Lapel Pin | 1 inch | \$5.00 | _____ | _____ |
| Red Amphibious Cloth Patch (<i>shoulder</i>) | 4 inch | \$4.00 | _____ | _____ |
| LCI Association Cloth Patch | 3 inch | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| LCI Association Decal (<i>inside window</i>) | 3 inch | \$0.75 | _____ | _____ |
| Red Amphibious Lapel Pin, small | 7/8 inch | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Red Amphibious Cap Pin, large | 1 inch | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Gold USN Fouled Anchor Cap Pin | 1 inch | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Gold USN Eagle Cap Pin | 1 inch | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Combat Vet Script Cap Pin | 1 inch | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Combat Action Ribbon | Full Size | \$3.00 | _____ | _____ |
| Iwo Jima – 50th Commemoration | 1 inch | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| MINIATURE MEDALS (<i>cap or lapel</i>) | 1 inch | | | |
| American Theater | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| European Middle East Theater | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Asia Pacific Theater | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Purple Heart | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Philippine Liberation | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Good Conduct | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| WWII Victory | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| China Service | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Navy Commendation | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Bronze Star | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Silver Star | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| MINIATURE METAL LAPEL RIBBONS | | | | |
| Purple Heart | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| China Service | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Navy Commendation | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Philippine Liberation | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Philippine Independence | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Navy Occupation | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| LCI Round Conn Ship Pin (<i>side view</i>) | Hand fired, polished cloisonne | \$6.00 | _____ | _____ |
| Normandy Invasion Pin 50th Anniversary | | \$4.00 | _____ | _____ |
| Normandy Invasion Beach Pins | Gold Tone | | | |
| Omaha | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Utah | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Juno | | \$3.50 | _____ | _____ |
| Tote Bag Blue w/gold logo, 13"x15" | | \$5.00 | _____ | _____ |
| LCI Association Cap, blue | Conn: round [] square [] | \$15.00 | _____ | _____ |
| LCI Association Cap, Tan Summer | Conn: round [] square [] | \$15.00 | _____ | _____ |
| Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum Caps | | | | |
| Blue | | \$15.00 | _____ | _____ |
| Gold | | \$15.00 | _____ | _____ |
| LCI History Book, Volume I | | \$40.00 | _____ | _____ |
| LCI History Book, Volume II | | \$40.00 | _____ | _____ |
| Heath's Excellent Black Cat Flotilla Book | | \$10.00 | _____ | _____ |
| SUB-TOTAL | Add 12% Shipping and Packaging | | | _____ |
| TOTAL | | | | _____ |

Make check payable to:

Gordon L. Smith

2313 N.E. 110th Avenue

Vancouver, WA 98684

E-mail: longing@aol.com

Your Officers and Board of Directors

With sadness, we remove the name of Tiny Clarkson as Secretary. Hal Bleyhl assumes the office of Treasurer and will give supervision and review to the work of Nehemiah Communications, Inc, in keeping the financial records of our association.

OFFICERS

James E. Talbert,
Chairman of the Board
(LCI 618)
12238 Woodland Trail
Council Bluffs IA 51503
(712) 366-1094

John P. Cummer, *President*
(LCI 502)
302 Pinewood Cottage Lane,
Blythewood, SC 29016
(803) 714-9098

Rod Scurlock, *Vice President*
(LCI 565)
4445 Mustang Drive
Boise, Idaho 83709
(208) 362-4447
rhscurlock@aol.com

Hal Bleyhl, *Treasurer*
LCI(L) 812
10418 Campville St.
Boise, ID 83709
(208) 639-9180

Robert McLain, *Secretary*
(LCI 436)
1829 Hemlock Road
Lancaster, PA 17603-4437
(717) 392-4558

David Cox, *Chaplain*
(LCI 633)
413 Tupilo Way NW
Birmingham, AL 35215
(205) 854-6229
Swabby1@bellsouth.net

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Aydelotte
(LCI 25)
3710 Goldfield Road #425
Apache Junction, AZ 85219-6609
Jj10723@aol.com

Connie R. Mulherin
LCI(G)561
1520 Sea Gull Drive
Titusville, FL 32796
(321) 268-1713
Cmulherin1@cfl.rr.com

Gordon Smith
LCI(L) 43
2313 Northeast 110th Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98684
(360) 256-5901
lohning@aol.net

OVERSEER

Roy E. Age
(LCI 802)
412 Silver Streak Lane
Valrico, FL 33594
(813) 689-5102
76235@Compuserve.com



PRESRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLUMBIA, SC
PERMIT 487

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

John P. Cummer, President
302 Pinewood Cottage Lane
Blythewood, SC 29016



USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

If you served aboard an LCI during WWII, you are cordially invited to join our Association. Please complete this form and mail it to the address indicated below with your first year's dues.

DUES ARE \$15.00 PER YEAR, June 1 through May 31. Life Membership \$75.00

Name_____ LCI Served On_____ Rank/Rate_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ ZIP_____

Date of Birth_____ Phone # _____ E-Mail Address_____

Occupation or Former Occupation_____

Wife's Name_____

Make Check payable to:
USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Send Application and Check to:
Howard B. Clarkson, Treasurer
73 Grange Road
Troy, NY 12180