

ISSUE 83 **JULY 2013**



Elsie Item

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

• *Established May 14–18, 1991, Norfolk, VA* •

USS LCI (FF) 370 FLOTILLA 16 FLAGSHIP

George Weber, now a resident of West Sacramento, CA, has some great sea stories that we are glad to be able to share with you about his service as Staff Radioman aboard Flotilla 16 Flagship, the USS LCI(FF) 370. See our feature article beginning on Page 15.



On Our Cover:

This excellent “bow on” view of the beached LCI (FF) 370 is on display in the lobby of the Navy Memorial Center in Washington, D.C.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Our **feature article** in this issue comes to us from **George Weber** and details his WWII Navy service from the time of his enlistment to his adventures in post-war China. Though a bit longer than some of the memoirs we have carried, we felt this one was such a good picture of the entire experience of service aboard an LCI with the added feature that it deals with an experience that most of us did not have—serving in China after the war was over. It also contains some interesting observations on George’s shipmates and, in particular, of his Captain whom he greatly admired. We hope that you enjoy this memoir and that it inspires more of you to send yours in—or, get in touch with **Zach Morris**, (morrisza@g.mail.com) (586-651-1263), our feature writer, who will be glad to interview you over the phone and put your memoir together for you. You’ll see an excellent example of Zach’s work on page 9 where he writes of **Edward Benoit** and the LCI 74 in “We All Went in United.”

And if you have pictures of your ship or shipmates those will be most welcome.

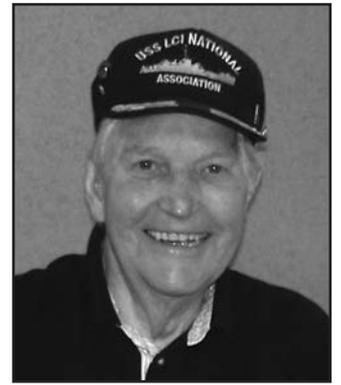
Our Reunion: We are repeating all the information about our September reunion in Branson again because registration to date is quite low and we want to be as certain as possible that you all get the opportunity to be there with us for what could be our last reunion.

“THE ELSIE ITEM”

NUMBER 83, July 2013

Official publication 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, to anyone related to an LCI veteran, or to anyone just interested in the history of LCIs. Published quarterly by the USS LCI National Association. John P. Cummer, Editor. Any material for possible publication should be sent to the Editor, preferably by email (cummerj@bellsouth.net) or by regular mail to 302 Pinewood Cottage Lane, Blythewood, SC, 29016.

A Word from the President



You may be having something of a *deja vu* experience as you leaf through this issue—haven't I seen this somewhere else before? And the answer is "yes"—we're once again including all the information and registration blanks for our reunion scheduled for **September 23-27** in **Branson, Missouri!** And the reason is that we need to urge many of you who have not yet registered to do so as soon as possible.

Our registration numbers are pretty small at the present time and we need to have just as many of you as possible there to make it financially feasible. But more than just the finances, we don't want to miss the opportunity to see each and every one of you again. This will be our last reunion under the old guard and, depending on what new leadership decides it may well be the last national reunion. We would like to make it as memorable as possible for as many of you as possible.

We certainly recognize that at our age it's tough to make long range plans. As Ted Day, says, "We don't buy green bananas anymore!"

Travel is a definite problem for so many of us. (My wife and I are making our reservations for wheel chairs to get through the airports!) But—how about all of us making at least one more great effort to be where we can, for one more time, enjoy the comradeship of our shipmates. I sincerely hope so!

And we want to urge as many of our non-LCI vet members to be there as possible, for this will be the time when major transitions will be made to leadership to you. As we've said before, it's encouraging to we old salts to see how many of you want to carry on to honor one of your relatives who served or just because you have a genuine interest in LCIs and the men who sailed in them. We're asking for a real step-up in your involvement.

All of you will definitely be needed. I've asked those board members who are not LCI vets to serve as a transition commission—thinking carefully about what you want the association to look like in the future. I've asked our chaplain, **Mike Gatton**, son of **John Gatton** of LCI 74, to chair this group. The others serving on this transition commission will be **John France, Joe Flynn, Steve Dudrow, Bob Wright, Diane Cronin, Dennis Blocker** and **Zach Morris**. I'm sure that most of you will know at least one of these leaders and I urge you to contact them with any ideas or offers of help you may be inspired to offer. All of us old timers will be grateful to every one of you who help in this transition effort.

So, here's my plea to you old salts and to you younger members—Bust your gut to get to Branson and get ready to help in this coming transition!

John Cummer

OUR REUNION HOTEL!



USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION 2013 REUNION BRANSON, MO

September
23–27, 2013

**USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
SEPTEMBER 23 – 27, 2013
RADISSON BRANSON**

Monday, September 23

- 2:00pm - 6:00pm **Reunion Registration open**
1:00pm - Hospitality Room opens for the duration of the reunion.
7:00pm - Meet & Greet Reception in the hospitality Room ??

Tuesday, September 24

- 9:00am - 10:00am **Reunion Registration open**
10:30am - 2:00pm BRANSON SCENIC RAILWAY (description follows)
4:00pm - 6:00pm **Reunion Registration open**
6:45pm - 10:30pm BALDKNOBBER'S JAMBOREE (description follows)

Wednesday, September 25

- 10:45am - 2:45pm SHOWBOAT BRANSON BELLE LUNCH CRUISE
(description follows)
3:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open.** Additional hours will be
posted at the reunion if necessary.
3:30pm - 4:30pm LCI Meeting for All Members Who Did Not Serve on
LCIs (formerly Affiliates)
7:00pm - 10:30pm SIX SHOW (description follows)

Thursday, September 26

- 9:00am - 11:00am Business Meeting.
1:00pm - 2:00pm USS LCI National Association Memorial Service
5:30pm - Cash Bar Reception
6:30pm - Banquet

Friday, September 27

Farewells & Departures

Register and pay online at www.afr-reg.com/lci2013

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY FOR ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

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

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. Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. Returned checks will be charged a \$20 fee. You may also register online and pay by credit card at www.afr-reg.com/lci2013 (3% will be added to total). All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before August 22, 2013. 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 8/22/13

	Price Per	# of People	Total
TOURS			
TUESDAY: BRANSON SCENIC RAILWAY	\$63		\$
TUESDAY: BALDKNOBBER'S JAMBOREE SHOW	\$53		\$
WEDNESDAY: LUNCH CRUISE	\$64		\$
WEDNESDAY: SIX SHOW	\$54		\$
BANQUET			
THURSDAY: BANQUET <i>(Please select your entrée)</i>			\$
BEEF MEDALLION W/ BORDELAISE SAUCE	\$34		\$
CHAMPAGNE CHICKEN	\$34		\$
MANDATORY PER PERSON REGISTRATION FEE			
Includes Hospitality Room and administrative expenses.	\$20		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$

PLEASE PRINT NAME AS YOU WANT YOUR NAMETAG TO READ

FIRST _____ LAST _____

(CIRCLE TYPE OF SHIP)

LCI LCI(FF) LCI(G) LCI(L) LCI(M) LCI(R) SHIP NUMBER _____

IF YOU HAVE A SEATING PREFERENCE, **OTHER THAN W/ YOUR SHIP**, PLEASE SPECIFY _____

SPOUSE NAME _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____ CITY, ST, ZIP _____

PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____ @ _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

(Sleeping room requirements must be conveyed by attendee directly to 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).

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

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-4:00pm EASTERN TIME (excluding holidays)**. Call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion.

REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.AFR-REG.COM/LCI2013

TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

BRANSON SCENIC RAILWAY

Tuesday, September 24

Enjoy a forty-mile, narrated ride through the countryside on a real passenger train. You will learn the history of the area as you cross bridges and trestles. Narration includes a description of the wildlife & landscape and an outline of the railroad's role in shaping the Ozarks. Experience the luxury of rail travel from yesteryear. Your trip includes a box lunch.

10:30am board bus, 2:00pm back at hotel

\$63/Person includes bus, escort, train ride, and lunch.

BALDKNOBBERS JAMBOREE SHOW

Tuesday, September 24

The Baldknobbers began in 1959, when the four Mabe brothers began entertaining fishermen on the downtown Branson lakefront. Now, over fifty years later, the second and third generations of the Mabe family continue the family tradition of combining your favorite country classics, with hot-new country hits and hilarious comedy into a fast paced, high energy show. Enjoy this musical powerhouse with a talented cast of singers, musicians, and comedians.

6:45pm board bus, 10:30pm back at hotel.

\$53/Person includes bus, escort, and show.

SHOWBOAT BRANSON BELLE LUNCH CRUISE

Wednesday, September 25

Cruise the waters of Table Rock Lake on board a paddle wheeler, the Showboat Branson Belle. Enjoy a served lunch 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. The show is all new – and such a variety – since our last trip in 2007.

10:45am board bus, 2:45pm back at hotel

\$64/Person includes bus, escort, and cruise.

SIX

Wednesday, September 25

See the show that everyone is talking about! The cast is six brothers and everything is done a cappella. The variety show includes many music genres, so it appeals to everyone. Their intense high-octane energy, electrifying stage presence, and powerhouse vocals combine to create a truly amazing entertainment experience. Your eyes won't believe your ears! No tracks, no lip-synchronizing, no band; just SIX human voices.

7:00pm board bus, 10:30pm back at hotel

\$54/Person includes bus, escort, and show.

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

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

All trips require a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.

RADISSON HOTEL BRANSON – BRANSON, MO
(417) 335-5767 (888) 566-5290

The newly renovated Radisson Hotel Branson is located at 120 South Wildwood Drive, Branson, MO 65616. The hotel is approximately 55 miles away from the Springfield Branson National Airport. Additionally, the hotel is approximately 15 miles away from the Branson Airport. If you are driving, please call the hotel directly for directions. The Radisson Hotel features 472 spacious guest rooms and suites, each equipped with a coffee maker, hair dryer, iron/ ironing board, and complimentary high speed internet access. The hotel also features an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, hot tub, sauna, and exercise room. Handicapped rooms are available, but subject to availability. Please request any special requests when making your hotel reservation. There is ample free parking available. Check-in time is 4:00pm and check-out is 11:00am. **Wildwood Bistro** offers local flavors with a bistro twist and is open for all meals. **Time Out Lounge**, serves your favorite cocktail, beer, or wine in a warm, friendly atmosphere that is uniquely Branson. Menu service is also available in the Time Out Lounge. Room service is available.

Four airlines (American, Allegiant, Delta, and United) service the Springfield Branson Airport. Classic Shuttle Service, offers shuttle service from the airport to downtown Branson. Currently, one-way service is \$60 for 1 person, \$70 for 2 people, \$90 for 3 people and \$30 each for a party of 4-10 people. Please call 417-598-0227 to make your reservations and to verify pricing. Terry's Transport, offers service to and from the airport, current fare for one-way service is \$74 for 1 person, \$79 for 2 people, \$84 for 3 people and \$29 per person for 4-17 people. Please call 417-331-2582 to make your reservations and verify pricing. All prices are subject to change, please call to verify pricing. Branson Airport, a smaller privately owned airport, uses Grayline for shuttle service to and from the airport. The cost is \$14 per person with a 2 person minimum. For questions or to make reservations, please contact Grayline at 800-237-4466 or www.bransongrayline.com. **All prices are subject to change, please call to verify pricing. 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 Branson KOA, 397 Animal Safari Road, Branson, MO 65616, at (800) 467-7611 or (417) 334-4414 for information, reservations, and directions. The RV Park is approximately 2 miles 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: SEPTEMBER 23-27 2013

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

TEL. # (_____) _____ EMAIL _____

ARRIVAL DAY & DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____ # NIGHTS _____

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

KING BED _____ 2 DOUBLE BEDS _____

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

RATE: \$111 + tax (currently 11.6%). Rate includes breakfast buffet for two people each day.

CUTOFF DATE: 08/22/13. Reservations received after this date will be processed on space & rate availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY: The Radisson's cancellation policy requires that any portion of a reservation must be cancelled 72 hours prior to arrival date. If a cancellation occurs within 72 hours, the penalty is a minimum of one night's room and tax. Early departures and no shows are subject to a penalty equal to a minimum of one night's room and tax.

Reservations must be guaranteed by credit card (information below) or first night's deposit enclosed.

___AMEX ___DINERS ___VISA ___MASTER CARD ___DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

MAIL TO: RADISSON HOTEL, 120 SOUTH WILDWOOD DRIVE, BRANSON, MO 65616

"WE ALL WENT IN UNITED"

Edward Benoit and the LCI (R) 74

by
Zach Morris



Zach meets Ed Benoit and two buddies from LCI 70. L to R: Ed Benoit, Zach Morris, Royal Wetzel, John Reulet

I had the pleasure of meeting Edward Benoit back in September 2012 at the annual LCI Association Reunion in Charleston, South Carolina. I interviewed Ed about his wartime experiences on January 20th, 2013. I also used information from a DVD interview he did for the National Archives in 2007. Eddie is a very dear friend of mine.

IT WAS STARTING RIGHT ON TIME. Just like it usually did. Pre-dawn. Just before the sunrise. With suddenness, he could hear the deafening sounds of the first bombs and see the flashes of light off in the distance just over the horizon. This is when Eddie would get that feeling in the pit of his stomach. It was all nerves from this point. Cape Gloucester, New Britain slowly became visible in the distance from the bombardment. Signalman Edward Benoit knew exactly what this meant—invasion.

Born in Norwich, Connecticut to a father and Navy veteran of World War I, Eddie Benoit enlisted in the United States Navy in

1942. He chose the Navy because he took comfort in the thought of always having a dry bed. No need to dig and endure the miseries of a foxhole.

When Pearl Harbor was attacked, Eddie's father, a Captain in the Guard at the time, was called up immediately. But before he left, he gave some advice to Eddie. He told him when he enlists the Navy is going to assign him to a role they believe he will be best for. He wanted Eddie to accept what they're going to do with him, and do his best at whatever role that may be. Eddie was determined to follow in his footsteps and make his father proud.

Eddie was eventually chosen to be a Signaller aboard the USS LCI (L) 74 in the Pacific Theater. He didn't exactly desire to be the vulnerable guy waving the flags on deck, but that's what he was chosen to do, and he did it proudly.

Eddie's first campaign of the war began with the landings of Lae, New Guinea in September 1943 known as Operation Postern. Eddie recalled just how frightened he was for his first invasion. Outfitted with fall weather gear, a heavy coat, and a life jacket during the initial assault, his LCI embarked the landing beach on a sunny, humid, ninety-degree tropical day. Yet, that did not stop him from shivering the whole way in. Throughout the duration of WWII, Eddie would see action in eleven different campaigns.

The amphibious landings of Cape Gloucester, New Britain began the day after Christmas 1943. The LCI (L) 74 was tasked with landing troops on the beaches of Cape Gloucester, New Britain. Those particular troops were the men of the 1st Marine Division, known as "The Old Breed." That morning started with a large amphibious assault and Eddie's job was to communicate instructions to the other ships in the assault wave using his flags. As the first wave approached the landing beach in a v-formation, the LCI 74's officers noticed they were landing the Marines in water up to their armpits, which was too deep. The Captain told Eddie that they needed to communicate to the other ships behind them to land farther west where it was shallower. So Eddie jumped up, and began to signal the ships behind them to land more westward while there was heavy enemy gunfire all around. Japanese, tied up in the treetops, were also firing at the approaching ships. Eddie remembers that another officer grabbed him and yanked him down from the exposed spot and yelled at him for such a foolish act. Nonetheless, the LCI (L) 74 landed the 1st Marine Division that December morning with the unity and determination that Eddie could only appropriately compare to that of a sports team. "It's an awful thing to say", he said, "but your enemy was your enemy."

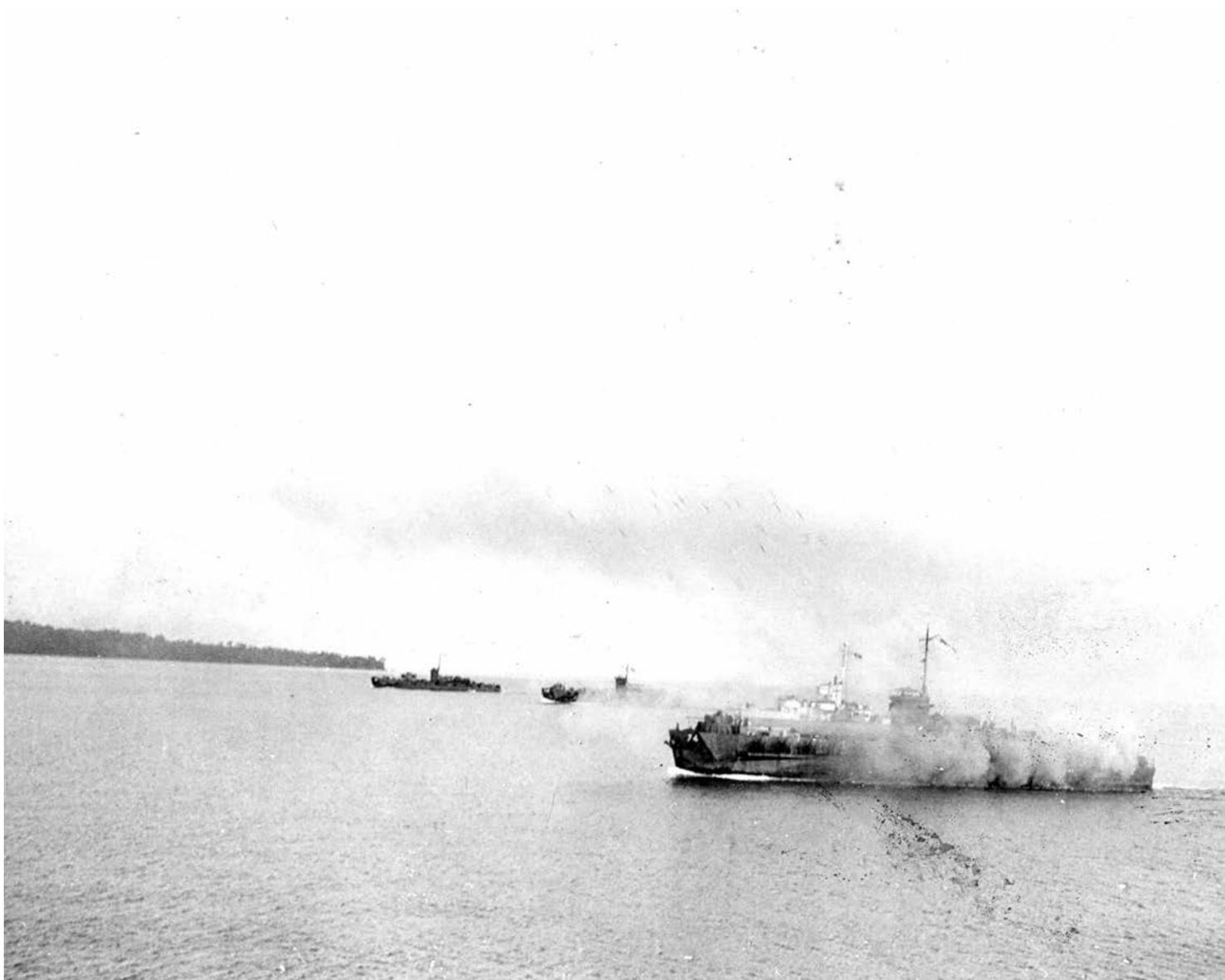
One amphibious assault after another brought the sailors that much closer to each other. The plank crew relied on one another and pulled as one. Each man of the LCI 74 was fighting for the man next to him. They fought with the initiative, courage, and cooperation that most Navy officers refer to when describing the highest traditions of the United States Navy.

Eddie summed it up by saying, "Consequently, we all went in united."

The LCI 74 was one of the many ships in the Pacific War in 1944, full of men combating boredom when not in actual combat. The sailors had a never-ending need to create their own amusement. Many times, a pair of exotic pets kept onboard provided this amusement. The first of these souvenir pets was a monkey that Eddie painted as a real hell-raiser, known for his reputation of reaching down and stealing sailors' food from their trays above them as the men were passing under a tarp set up on-deck for shade. The second pet was a cockatoo, a native bird to the South Pacific. Eddie recalled a time where the monkey jumped onto the cockatoo's cage, grabbed something inside, and was immediately attacked by the cockatoo in response. The sailors laughed in enjoyment as they observed the cage fall, and rattle as it rolled down the passageways from the animals' altercation. Incidents like these were common occurrences as the sailors constantly struggled to satisfy a chronic need for things to pass the time.

My personal favorite of Eddie's stories is the very first one he told me when I met him at the 2012 LCI Association reunion in Charleston, South Carolina. He told me about his encounter with a beautiful young French girl while ashore obtaining provisions on New Caledonia Island, a possession of France. At the time, Eddie was present with his commanding officer. Eddie introduced himself to her, and as such, established his background by his ostensibly French last name. It quickly became clear the French girl was quite fond of the unshaven, fully bearded Eddie Benoit when he demonstrated that he could speak French fluently. She boldly asked Eddie to join her on a date later that night in front of Eddie's commanding officer. Eddie and the Officer returned to their ship where Eddie bragged to the rest of the crew of his accomplishment while ashore. The Captain was kind enough to grant Eddie liberty that night so he could attend his date. However, prior to his date, Eddie made an ill-fated decision. He decided to shave his beard before leaving the ship. This harmless routine procedure proved to be a most regrettable decision. Upon arrival at the French girl's house for their date, she immediately dismissed Eddie since he no longer had his beard. Unfortunately for Eddie, his ensemble of facial hair was the reason she was interested in him. A dejected Eddie was forced to return to a ship full of fellow crewman who found the quick turn of events to be absolutely hysterical.

The LCI 74 was converted into a Rocketship in early 1944, henceforth being known as the USS LCI (R) 74. Eddie's LCI was armed with 476 4.5-inch MK7 rockets capable of firing off in about 10 seconds. Both sides of Eddie's LCI were installed with anti-personnel rockets that were crucial to covering future amphibious landings of allied troops while firing close ashore.



LCI 74 at Brunei Bay, Borneo, June 10, 1945—Rockets are Flying!

The LCI (R) 74 was now equipped to provide suppressive fire starting when the heavy naval and aerial bombardments ceased, right up to the moment the initial assault troops from the first waves came ashore. Japanese troops defending the beaches could no longer use the vulnerable lull period to re-group and re-organize.

Eddie's last action of the war was the Netherlands East Indies Campaign in September 1944. He was sent home with a case of Combat Fatigue from his position in Hollandia New Guinea in October 1944, just as General MacArthur's Sixth US Army and the Seventh Amphibious Fleet were preparing for the Leyte, Philippines Operation.

Eddie was transferred back stateside to Newport, Rhode Island for treatment. While there, he was assigned to NOB signal

tower where he made the rating of Chief Petty Officer. Shortly after the war, he was married and earned his electrical partnership. It took a while for Eddie to get readjusted to civilian life again, but like many other veterans of WWII, found ways to move on and get on with life afterwards.

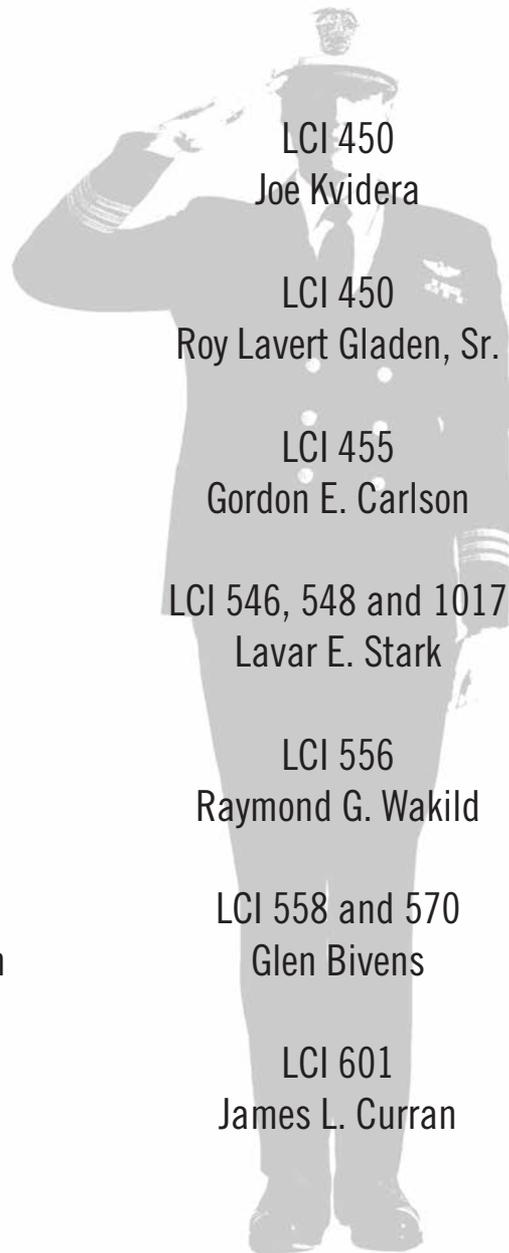
From witnessing his inexperienced teenage crew unite into one veteran fighting force, to serving his country and making Chief Petty Officer after only three and a half years in the Navy, Eddie expressed being proud of his wartime experiences.

But one accomplishment in particular stands out in Eddie's mind as the most special of all – the fact that he fulfilled his father's wishes and made him proud.

IN MEMORIAM

“Almighty and eternal God, from whose love we cannot be parted, either by death or life; hear our prayers and thanksgiving for those whom we here remember.”

“Grant unto sorrowing family and shipmates the blessing of your peace that passes understanding.”



LCI 64
Burton Yandell

LCI 65
Elmer Kinsinger

LCI 217
Eston Miracle

LCI 365
Cecil Leroy Reed

LCI 372
Joseph Goldberg

LCI 407
Lewis A. “Chick” Mason

LCI 427
Marion Kunitsky

LCI 450
Joe Kvidera

LCI 450
Roy Lavert Gladen, Sr.

LCI 455
Gordon E. Carlson

LCI 546, 548 and 1017
Lavar E. Stark

LCI 556
Raymond G. Wakild

LCI 558 and 570
Glen Bivens

LCI 601
James L. Curran

LCI 758
Edward Gravius

LCI 758
Frank Robert Schultheis, Jr.

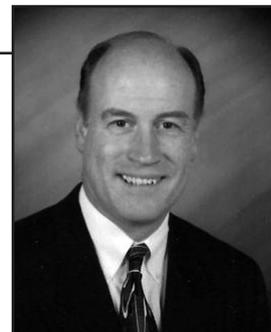
LCI 803
Paul H. Vorbeck

LCI 995
Robert Snider

LCI 1021 and 966
Byron Swift

LCI 1024
Robert Penson

LCI 1091
Robert Wright



Take Your Stand!

“CHRIST HAS SET US FREE TO LIVE A FREE LIFE. SO TAKE YOUR STAND!
NEVER AGAIN LET ANYONE PUT A HARNESS OF SLAVERY ON YOU.”
(Galatians 5:1, *The Message*)

FOR THIS MONTH IN WHICH WE CELEBRATE THE INDEPENDENCE DAY OF OUR NATION, the following simple message has been posted on our electronic highway sign at the Louisville, Kentucky church where I serve as pastor: “Freedom is not free.”

Freedom carries with it responsibilities. Writer John Marquand in his book *Wickford Point* tells about a fictional family named Brill. The Brills are an unusual family. They are living off the lingering reputation of an ancestor, known as the Wickford Sage. The Sage was a famed New England poet. All of the characters in the Brill family are wastrels. Archie, the father, is a mural artist who never paints any murals. The young men are forever chasing after improbable jobs that won't amount to anything, and their sisters are forever chasing after rich, old family males who will never amount to anything either. The Brills are bound to each other by unhealthy dependencies, but it is their mother Clothilde who epitomizes the family. She spends most of her life lounging on couches and asking, “Why doesn't anyone take care of me, darling? I get tired of doing everything for everybody. I have to take care of everyone else all the time. It would be nice if someone would take care of me for a change.” The problem is that everyone in the family says the same thing, each in his or her own way. The Brills have one thing many of us long for—economic freedom—but, their freedom has robbed them of their sense of responsibility.

We often criticize today's poor for their sense of entitlement—their sense that the world owes them a living. We ignore the fact that the wealthy have always felt that way. Pampered people rarely develop a sense of responsibility. Rich or poor, without a sense of responsibility to our families, to our communities, to God we waste away emotionally, morally, spiritually. Freedom carries with it responsibilities.

Freedom also carries with it consequences. The freedom to drive a car carries with it the terrible weight of responsibility for the damage that an out-of-control car can do. The freedom to eat what you choose carries with it the responsibility to choose healthy foods and the good sense not to overindulge. There is a precarious balance between freedom and license. Many people lose the things most precious to them because they cannot handle the gift of freedom.

Harriet Tubman knew how precious freedom is. Harriet escaped slavery to become the most famous conductor on what came to be known as the “Underground Railroad.” Ms. Tubman once said, “I freed thousands of slaves. I could have freed thousands more, if they had known they were slaves.” There are people who are slaves and don't even know it—slaves to dangerous and disgusting habits, slaves to dehumanizing and degrading lifestyles, slaves to self-defeating attitudes and life-denying practices. We live in a society that thinks it can defy the laws of sowing and reaping, but it is an illusion. Want a healthy body? Then sow the right seeds for a healthy body. Want a happy marriage? Then, sow the seeds of a happy marriage. We are free. We can choose, but freedom has consequences.

The cost of freedom is high. Maya Angelou tells of Tom, a slave in the antebellum South. Tom's owner allowed him to take jobs off the plantation at night, on holidays, and on weekends. He worked hard all day at his own plantation, then walked several miles into town and worked there to earn money. After two hours sleep, he would rise and repeat the process. This went on for years, and Tom saved every penny. He didn't marry, didn't spend the money, but saved it all. After he had stashed away a thousand dollars, he went to the owner of the plantation and asked how much he was worth. The owner said most slaves brought between \$800 and \$1,200, but since Tom was older and had no children, if he wanted to buy his own freedom he would let him go for \$600. Tom thanked the owner and returned to his cabin. He dug up the money, and as he fondled the cash in his hands, he began to remember how long it had taken to earn it, how hard he had worked. Finally, he put it back into the hiding place, returned to the owner and told him, “Boss, freedom is a little too high right now. I'm going to wait till the price comes down.” For those who have defended our freedoms through the years the price has been high—danger, suffering, even death. Our freedom cost Christ his very life. Freedom is a precious gift. “Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand!”

Agape, Mike

Tales from a Flotilla 16 Staff Radioman

By
George H. Weber



LCI(R) Flotilla 16 staff man the radio room aboard (seated, foreground, left is S. Cranke RM3/c, R.A. Klotz S1/c and standing left H.H. Klompke S1/c and standing closer and center left E.J. Grover CRM and George Weber RM1/c)USS LC(FF)-370 during General Quarters, while off the invasion beaches at Okinawa, circa March-June 1945.

George Weber, now a resident of West Sacramento, CA, has some great sea stories that we are glad to be able to share with you about his service aboard Flotilla 16 Flagship, the USS LCI(FF) 370

My Introduction to the Navy

In the early days of Amphibious Forces, it seemed the traditional navy looked askance at us. Here we were, large, unwieldy and plodding vessels that were flat-bottomed without trim lines designed to be run ashore. That made them prone to flaunt one of the most sacred rules of the navy: Never run your ship ashore!

I had grown up in rural Indiana in an area where everyone spoke v-e-r-y s-l-o-w-l-y. The teachers, the preachers — everyone. I guess this made me listen very slowly also, for trying to learn to copy Morse code at Radio Operators School was very difficult for me. And three weeks before I would have graduated I was flunked out of the school due to my persistent inability to “get in the swing” of

Morse code. Two other young sailors who were also dismissed from school and I were assigned as radio crew on the USS LST 45, which we picked up at Dravo Shipyards in Pittsburgh, PA. I had flunked out with the highest (but inadequate) code-copying score, so I was put in charge of the radio shack.

At the very beginning of my naval career I had experienced quite a shock: seven of us slow-speaking yokels had been combined with 93 parolees from New York State Reformatories to form a boot camp company! They spoke so fast and with such a New York street accent that we could not understand what they said. They thought we spoke so slowly that life was too short to wait for us to finish a sentence—so we communicated hardly at all. They were accustomed in the reformatories to the kind of rules and regulations that boot camp entailed so were bored by them. They thought up devilments that kept getting us into trouble. But we never knew what they were planning. When their nefarious actions came to the notice of the authorities, 93% of the company were guilty, so we were all punished. All through boot camp we never had canteen or movie privileges. We marched to chow and to religious services on Sundays; otherwise we drilled or shoveled snow, from one pile to a new pile and then from that pile to a newer pile. We wore that snow out!

Of course, boot camp was not supposed to be a bed of roses, but ours was much thornier than it needed to be. Overall our company had behaved so badly (at least 93% of it) that we were kept at Great Lakes for a second boot camp period. “It never rains, but it pours.”

When we three Radiomen went aboard the USS LST 45 in Pittsburgh I guess the idea was for the ship’s crew to get used to being on a ship. There was an inexperienced “ferry crew” that handled the ship as we went a few hundred yards down the Monongahela River to the Ohio, then down the Ohio River to the Mississippi. Our mast was lashed horizontally so we could pass under a number of bridges we encountered on the Ohio River. Once on the Mississippi we went on down to Algiers Naval Station, across the river from New Orleans. There the ferry crew left us and our mast was stepped.

All the officers – other than the captain – were “90-Day Wonders” and most of the crew were flunkouts, like we radiomen, or parolees from the Portsmouth Naval Brig, etc. But now, with a job to do (win the war) everyone seemed motivated to do their best, and all went well. FINALLY!

After the Kwajalein invasion I was transferred to the USS LCI(FF) 370 where I spent the remainder of WWII, involved in the invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

A Wurlitzer in the Foc’sle

After the USS LCI(FF) 370 finished its practice beaching on the Coronado Strand and firing at San Nicholas Island and was now ready to leave the San Diego area, headed for Honolulu and then the Iwo Jima invasion, a naval photographer came aboard. We were surprised to see that a photographer was assigned to our small vessel, but assumed he was to get film footage of us firing rockets.

He seemed to be what one would call a “deft operator.” He asked us if there was something he could get for us before we left the states. We thought that once we were at sea and out of the range of shore radio stations that broadcast pop music, we would soon dire of the few V-discs we had to play on our unreliable phonograph. The next day we were startled by him arriving in a pick-up truck with a large, gaudy Wurlitzer juke box and four boxes of records! The records were 78s – the only kind available in those days.

Where were we to put that huge jukebox on our already crowded LCI, which had its regular crew and officers, plus the Flotilla Commander’s staff aboard? We finally decided to lash it to the railing that surrounded the ladder opening leading down below decks to the forward crew’s quarters in the Foc’sle. We filled it with records and stowed the rest of them in a peak void space. By the time we grew tired of that first load of records we had been out in the tropics for some time. The ocean temperature was 80 degrees and the air temperature 85 or above. The dark grey ship’s deck would be too uncomfortably hot to walk on barefooted and it must have really gotten hot in that peak void space. When we opened it and retrieved the boxes of records they were all much too warped out of shape by the heat for the juke box to cycle them!

As a result, we were stuck with the original collection of records. Crew member would come up individually and play them out of desperation. Whenever they did, if I was in my sack trying to sleep, I would hear them over and over because my bunk was immediately below that juke box. Juke boxes were not designed to withstand the pounding of our ship’s flat bottom on the ocean’s surface, so gradually more and more of those records were cracked or scratched beyond playing condition. Eventually only two records were still playable: one a female singer singing *Side by Side* and another of a jazz pianist playing some very good boogie-woogie jazz – *Eight to the Bar*. Half way through that record the guy would stop playing and, continuing the boogie-woogie beat, would say:

“If you’ve got a beat that’s not on the beam,
That’s because you’ve been cooking with cream.

If you want a beat that's solid and hard,
Fry me, cookie, with a can of lard"

Then he resumed his playing.

So I got to hear that bit of nonsense hundreds of times –often enough to imprint it in my memory to this day. Before it became too much of an ordeal to hear them over and over those last two records were also broken, perhaps saving my sanity.

My Short Stint as a Film Comedian

When at Iwo Jima we had launching rack spaces for 72 rockets. We brought the rockets up from below deck storage space by forming a line and passing them along that line like in a "bucket brigade." They were heavy 5" shells, like those fired from battleship and heavy cruiser's guns. With a small rocket device attached to their end. Bringing up and attaching those 72 rockets took close to thirty minutes. Then we moved to some shielding space while they were fired – which took only a few seconds. This process was continued for about seven hours, until all the rockets aboard had been fired.

In anticipation of this hard and fast schedule, our cooks prepared enough hams, baked enough bread and stewed enough coffee for us to eat and drink during those seven hours, for they would be helping in loading during that time and not able to cook. You grabbed a sandwich and a cup of coffee, trying to get your mouth full of ham sandwich which you could chew and swallow while working in the rocket loading line.

One time, while I was cramming as much of a sandwich as my mouth would hold during the brief respite from loading, I was raising my cup of coffee towards my mouth to wash some of my mouth contents down, when the rockets were all fired. They made a tremendous WHOOSH! I gave a startled jump and sloshed hot coffee into my face. The photographer had been filming my hectic eating and so had the entire debacle on film. That film came back to the ship but it had no sound track. So, without the "whoosh" the film seemed to show me stuffing too much food into my mouth and then, inexplicably, tossing a cup of coffee into my face! This brought down gales of laughter from the crew and it was shown over and over. Although there were a few other comical moments aboard the ship that was the only one that got preserved on film.

Captain Coffin, One of My Heroes



CDR Coffin, LCI(R) Flotilla 16, aboard USS LC(FF)-370 while off the beaches invasion at Okinawa, circa March–June 1945.

Our Flotilla LCI 16 Commander, Captain Coffin, was an old Navy "salt." He had been on the Yangtze River Patrol back when it existed. During that time he had met a beautiful Eurasian young woman, and they planned on getting married.

Before they could, he was transferred to the USS Marblehead and was on that ship in the Coral Sea area, near Perth, Australia, at the beginning of World War II. While ashore in Perth, he and some other officers, well into their cups, gave a fellow officer a "punishment" thrashing for his persistence in belittling and mistreating crew members under his command. For this they all got reprimands entered into their naval records and were transferred off the ship. Captain Coffin then became our LCI Flotilla Commander at a time when such amphibious ship duty was considered mild punishment.

As our Flotilla Commander, he was a very capable and easygoing officer, and a bit unconventional. He often dressed only in walking shorts and flip-flops, sitting at his desk in his small stateroom. In this attire his very hairy back was exposed and what looked like seven purplish knife wounds were visible. Of course no one asked about those scars.

After Okinawa was secured and all the battleships and cruisers had departed, he happened to be the highest-ranking officer present, so became SOPA. This duty he could easily handle, but it did put a strain on the radio equipment of an LCI. As you all know, we sat so low in the water that a gangway was not needed, so there was no Officer of the Deck waiting there as was the usual custom on larger ships. Arriving ship's captains would see our SOPA flag and come alongside in their fancy captain's gigs to report their purpose, etc. Some dungaree-clad lounging sailor would direct them to Captain Coffin's cabin, where their original puzzlement would be added to by his lack of formal attire.

We were in Leyte Gulf preparing for the invasion of Japan when the war ended. Captain Coffin made certain that we were the LCIs to go to north China to accept the surrender of Japanese forces there. This was a necessary endeavor, but also would afford him an opportunity to try to find his Eurasian girl friend – if she were still alive after the many bloody years of Japanese occupation of north China. Fortunately, he found that she was. Later I saw that his new ship was in Pearl Harbor and I went aboard to visit him. He and his lady were now married and had had their first child.

A brief Walk on the Wild Side, and an Unexpected Social Event

After our stint as SOPA at Okinawa we were relieved by a large ship and we headed back to Leyte. The day after we departed almost all of the crew got to feeling really sick. Of course, we had no doctor aboard and were accompanied only by other LCIs who also did not have doctors. Our Pharmacist Mate kept us dosed up on Paregoric. Since it had an opium derivative in it, it DID make us feel better!

By the time we got to Leyte Gulf we were rather hooked on the addictive drug it contained. At Leyte, we were able to see a doctor and he said we all had Dengue Fever, but it had probably run its course and that we would begin to recover. But – we pretended, as long as this act worked – that we had not recovered so we could continue to be given the Paragoric. After a few days, however, the doctor caught on to our ploy and our Paragoric doses were stopped. We all went “cold turkey” in a hot climate! Thankfully, our addiction was mild.

With ship preparations for the invasion of Japan finished, we had some days of nothing to do. At the suggestion of Captain Coffin we went through the San Jacinto Straits that lay between Samar and Leyte Islands. Those straits were very narrow and shallow and were not considered navigable, but

our small, shallow-draft LCIs could make it. Even going slowly we made a sizeable wave that washed the homes and other structures along the strait. Once through the straits we were in the Samar Sea which had a few inhabited small islands. We anchored near the first island we came to, and some local officials came out in a canoe. Although we did not share a common language, a priest was with them who spoke Spanish and we had a Puerto Rican crew member so they worked things out. They invited us to a feast that they were going to have in our honor. Half of the crew and most all of the officers went ashore. I was not in the liberty group that was allowed to go. We were told that the food was well-prepared, but rather sparse, due to it being wartime. We also were told that some of the village girls did a dance as a show. There was no “co-ed” dancing and no access to the girls at all, a situation which was to be expected. The feast delayed things so we had to go back through the narrow straits after dark, which was not easy. We could see the shoreline but could not judge where it was by the kerosene lanterns in all the houses along the way.

So, we had two “trips” that were unexpected, all within a few days – the “opium” trips and the San Jacinto trip plus the feast.

Adventures in Post-War China

While I was on Captain Coffin's staff in the USS LCI(FF) 370, he was always calmly efficient and fair in all his dealings with personnel under his command. When we were in Tientsin as an officer he was able to draw enough money from his accumulated pay to give the sailors aboard the ship – his staff and the ship's crew - \$30 each as spending money. It doesn't sound like much, but it really was back in those days. It went far at that time in China, where one American dollar was worth \$2,000 Chinese dollars! (A rickshaw ride costs \$100 Chinese dollars, which was five cents American. A bottle of excellent Russian vodka cost \$700 Chinese, or thirty five cents American) We would have nothing smaller than \$100 bills in Chinese currency.

One time I was hungry and in a Chinese section of Tientsin (it had been an international city before the war) and I smelled something good being cooked at a food stall. It turned out to be sautéed blintz-like things that were stuffed mainly with seasoned chopped leeks. I ate my fill of them but then we had a problem: the man doing the frying did not have change for a \$100 bill, and I only owed him less than ten dollars. Fortunately, a student in the traditional black kimono “uniform” the wore and who spoke English came along. With his help I was able to purchase enough things from adjacent shops that added up to \$100 Chinese. So, in addition to the

“blintzes” I got a Chinese bamboo “violin”, a small oil lamp, some blocks of solid black ink, and a writing brush, a small cloisonné sake jug with six tiny cups and a small Chinese flag!

When you dined in a fancy restaurant and the bill came – which would be in Chinese dollars – you felt like a millionaire. The meal would have usually cost between \$4,000 and \$6,000 Chinese dollars! Of course, that was just between two and three dollars American.

We were very naïve, and this was inconvenient. Restaurants, gift shops, etc., would give you business cards – English on one side, Chinese on the other. We would show the Chinese side to a rickshaw man and he would smile, nod his head, and off we would go with him taking us to some place that was not what it said on the card. Then we would have to flag a new

driver and go through the whole kibash again. Finally we learned, but someone in the know telling us, that none of the poor men pulling rickshaws could read Chinese! In our ignorance, that had never occurred to us.

There were lots of “white” Russians in north China, having escaped with their lives when the Communists took over Russia. They always looked well-dressed and usually spoke English. Once I was far from our ship and needed to get back to it, but could not make the rickshaw driver understand where I wanted to go. A young woman with a small boy with her, who looked barely old enough to walk, came along. I asked her if she spoke English. “Yes”, she said. I asked “Would you tell this driver I want to go to the foot of Victoria Bund?” She turned and spoke to the small child in German, and he spoke to the driver in Chinese! Miracles do happen.



A very special flag! Three philippino guerillas, identified as Sgt. Verana, Cpl. Sabpe, and First Lieutenant Virtuto hold an American flag which they held hidden during the entire time of the Japanese occupation. Looking on are members of the crew of LCI(G) 4.

A 70th Anniversary Tour: D-Day to the Rhine!



Ten years ago Chaplain **Mike Gatton**, his dad, **John**, and eight other hardy LClers and spouses, had the great experience of revisiting England and Normandy on the 60th anniversary of D-Day. Mike and his father enjoyed the trip so much that they are planning to go back for the 70th anniversary and invite you to join them.

The dates will be **May 31–June 13, 2014** and the tour is presented by **Stephen Ambrose Historical Tours**.

The tour will begin with two days in **London** for introductory lectures and visits to key sites that figured prominently in the war, such as **Churchill's war room** and the **Imperial War Museum** which houses authentic examples of World War II weaponry, tanks, and aircraft. A day will then be spent in **Portsmouth** with a visit to **Southwick House**, **General Eisenhower's headquarters** and to the award-winning **D-Day Museum** and **Overlord tapestry**. On the following day, a visit to the **Royal Marine Museum** and **Nelson's HMS Victory** is scheduled before boarding the cross-channel ferry. Dinner will be served aboard the ferry and, upon arrival in France, motor coaches will take the group to their hotel in **Caen**.

On June 5th the group will visit the British and Canadian beaches – **Sword**, **Juno** and **Gold** – on the way to the guns at **Longues-sur-Mer**, the battery against which **HMS Ajax** scored perhaps the most accurate (and perhaps the luckiest) hit of the war. After lunch the group will visit **Bayeux**.

On June 6th, the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day invasion, the group will attend commemorative events at **Utah beach**, **Ste-Mere-Eglise** and **Pointe du Hoc**. On the following day the morning will be spent at **Omaha Beach** and the **American Cemetery**.

On June 8th, the group moves to **Paris** and have the opportunity to visit sites such as the **Eiffel Tower**, **Les Invalides**, which houses **Napoleon's tomb**, **Notre Dame**, the **Tuilleries** and the **Louvre**.

On following days the tour will trace the campaign across Europe, visiting **Arnhem**, site of "**Operation Market-Garden**", **The Ardennes**, **Luxembourg (Bastogne)** and **Frankfurt** before departing from Frankfurt International Airport on June 13th.

An optional post tour will visit the **Berchtesgaden** and **Dachau** area.

Full information and brochures on the trip can be obtained from **Stephen Ambrose Historical Tours** at 1-888-903-3329 or visit www.stephenambrosetours.com.

Memories of Past Reunions!

Just to remind you of some of the great times we've had at past reunions – and to encourage you to make our September reunion in Branson, here are some pictures of past reunions.



Mobile, 2008: Shipmates John Reulet and Roy Wetzel meet for the first time in 63 years!

Washington, D.C., 2003: Tiny and Janet Clarkson enjoy the river cruise along with Jim and Jean Talbert and Wayne Bryant



Portland, 2004: Bill Rangle (LCI 207) and William DuBois (LCI 965) enjoy the scenery up the beautiful Columbia River



Branson, 2007: Jack Boyce, LCI 651 has a great time with his son Tim, and Grandson, Glen

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Please feel free to contact any of the officers or directors listed below for whatever comments or questions you may have.
We're here to serve you!

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Northwest LCers Enjoy a Great Reunion

Eleven LCers, five associate members fourteen wives and four volunteers working on the restoration of LCI 713 enjoyed a reunion in Boise, Idaho, June 4–5. Taking advantage of the fact that Boise is the state capitol of Idaho, the group paid a visit to the capitol building and were greeted by **Lieutenant Governor Brad Little**.

Among the Associate Members in attendance were LCI

Association board members **Joe Flynn** and **Robert Wright**. Speaker for the banquet was retired four-star **Admiral Archie Clemins**. A graduate of the NROTC program at the University of Illinois, Admiral Clemins had an illustrious career in the Navy, culminated by commanding the Pacific Fleet and the 7th Fleet in Asia.

Hal sent us a nice group of pictures that we want to share with you.



The Impressive Idaho State Capitol Building



Lieutenant Governor Welcomes the LCers Left to right: Gordon Smith, LCI 43; Chris Shelvik, LCI 337; LeRoy Olson, LCI 966; Rod Scurlock, LCI 565; Dave McKay, LCI 30; Lieutenant Governor Brad Little; Hal Bleyhl, LCI 821; Dr. John Stanley, LCI 958



Gordon Smith tries out the Governor's Chair!



LCers join other veterans at an open house which is held the first Tuesday of every month at the Warhawk Museum



The Leroy Olsons and Rod Scurlock visit the LCI display at the Warhawk Museum



An enjoyable lunch at the VFW arranged by Leroy Olson



A business meeting—taking a bit of time out from the festivities to discuss future plans for the Northwest group.

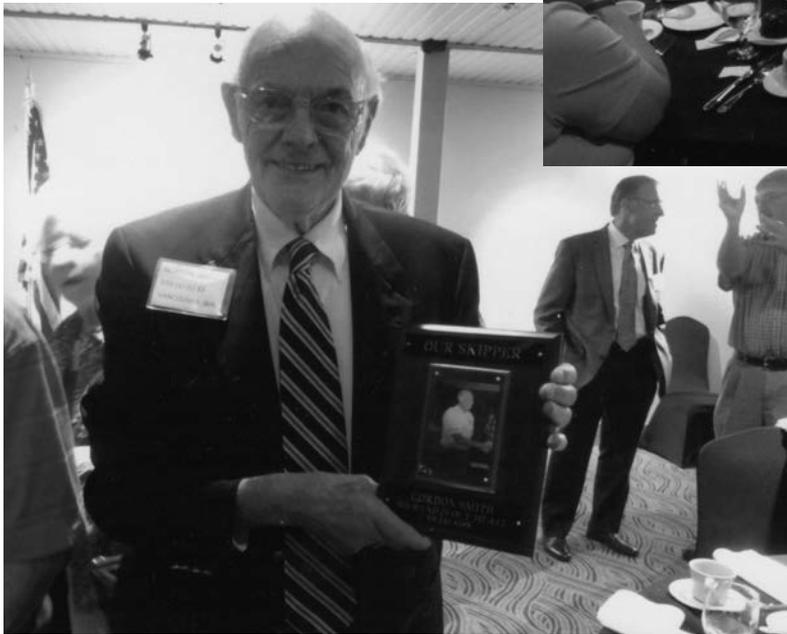


Hal Bleyhl welcomes banquet speaker retired four-star Admiral Archie Clemens



Entertainment at the banquet— a lovely, special touch

Guests enjoy an excellent banquet

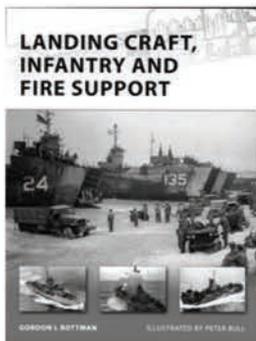


Gordon Smith is honored for his leadership in the work of restoring LCI 713 at the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum.

LCI Association board member Robert Wright enjoys the banquet with Mr. and Mrs. Rod Scurlock.



Your USS LCI Association Needs Your Support



New Item

A pledge of \$20.00 to the USS LCI National Association

Will bring a copy of the Book **Landing Craft Infantry and Fire Support** by Gordon Rottman. This book contains one of the best histories of the development and the deployment of the LCI in WWII

A pledge of \$25.00 to the USS LCI National Association

You can choose between 2 LCI Ball Caps.

Style 1 WWII The newest style lets everyone know that you are a proud member of the USS LCI National Association who served during World War II. A silhouette of an LCI is surrounded by the stars and stripes form the letters WWII

Style 2 Stars and Stripes embroidered with your choice of the Navy or Coast Guard LCI Association emblem.



New Item



A pledge of \$50.00 to the USS LCI National Association

You will be rewarded with this new style polo shirt which includes your choice of our Navy or Coast Guard LCI Association emblem. Colors: White or Navy

A Pledge of \$100.00

to the USS LCI National Association today you will be rewarded with this Fully lined Light Weight Jacket with your choice of our Navy or Coast Guard LCI Association emblem. Colors: Khaki or Navy



For \$10 your Name and Ship are embroidered on the right chest of the Jacket (see picture)

Thank You for Supporting the USS LCI National Association!

Mail This Form with Your Check to:
USS LCI National Association
101 Rice Bent Way # 6
Columbia, S.C., 29229



Additional Information Contact:
Robert Wright (517) 548-1026

Member Name _____ USS LCI (____) _____

Member Phone Number _____

Member Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email Address _____

\$ 20 Donation Book Landing Craft infantry and Fire Support

Amount Paid: \$ _____

\$ 25 Donation LCI Association Cap WWII _____

add \$6 shipping = **\$31**

or

\$ 25 Donation LCI Association Cap Stars and Stripes _____

add \$6 shipping = **\$31**

Service Branch: Navy _____ Coast Guard _____

Amount Paid: \$ _____

\$ 50 Donation LCI Association Polo Shirt

add \$6 shipping = **\$56**

Service Branch: Navy _____ Coast Guard _____

Shirt Color: Navy _____ White _____

Size: S _____ M _____ L _____ XL _____ XXL _____

Amount Paid: \$ _____

\$ 100 Donation LCI Association Jacket

add \$12 shipping = **\$112**

Add Name Embroider Last Name and Ship Number on Jacket

add \$ 10 = **\$122**

Service Branch: Navy _____ Coast Guard _____

Jacket Color: Navy _____ Khaki _____

Size: S _____ M _____ L _____ XL _____ XXL _____

Total Paid: \$ _____

(Allow us 3 weeks to Produce and Deliver your order to you)

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is open to anyone who served in Landing Craft, Infantry, during WWII or anyone else interested in our small ships and the men who served aboard them.

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

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

I. For application as a LCI Veteran:

Name _____

Which LCI did you serve on? _____ What was your Rank/Rate? _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Phone #: _____/ _____

E-mail address: _____

Occupation or Former Occupation: _____

Wife's Name _____

II. For Application as a Relative or Interested Person:

Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Phone #: _____/ _____

Are you related to someone who served on an LCI? Yes No

If so, what is the relationship? (i.e. father, grandfather, uncle, etc) _____

What is/was his name? _____

On which LCI did he serve? _____

(If unknown or if you do not have a relative who served on an LCI, leave blank)

Please send this application with your check (\$25) made payable to
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This Issue's Featured Ship: USS LCI(F) 370. Looking aft toward the conning tower and superstructure while underway off the invasion beaches of Okinawa, circa March-June 1945. Note the large array of antennas needed to support LCI(R) Flotilla 16 staff. Note also the extended bridge needed to provide adequate signal station room.