

August 2015



Elsie Item

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
USS LANDING CRAFT, INFANTRY, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, INC.
• Established May 14-18, 1991, Norfolk, VA •

**Landing Craft
Infantry, 1944**

**U.S. NAVY
AMPHIBIOUS
LANDING
CRAFT:
THEN
AND NOW**

**Landing Craft Air
Cushion (LCAC), 2015**

ON OUR COVER:

TOP: USS LCI(L)-1097, and USS LST-652, moored pier-side, 6 December 1944, at Navy Pier in Chicago, during the 6th War Bond Drive Exhibition, Photo was taken after LCI 1097 was commissioned at DeFoe Shipyard and prior to her trip down the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers and out to the Pacific War.

(U.S. Navy photo courtesy Floating Drydock; navsource.org)

BOTTOM: INDIAN OCEAN (July 8, 2015) - Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) 9, assigned to the Naval Beach Unit 7, departs the well deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6), which is taking part in exercise Talisman Sabre 2015. Talisman Sabre is a biennial exercise that provides an invaluable opportunity for nearly 30,000 U.S. and Australian defense forces to conduct operations in a combined, joint and interagency environment that will increase both countries' ability to plan and execute a full range of operations from combat missions to humanitarian assistance efforts.

(Information courtesy U.S. Pacific Fleet Facebook page; U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Naomi Van user)

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

- *Rita France Memoriam*
- *Charleston Joint LCI & LST Reunion Info!*
September 17–20, 2015!
- *"Million Dollar Bellyache"*
By Lou Scolnik (LCI 776)



CHECK OUT THESE WEB SITES:

www.usslci.com Our own website

www.amphibiousforces.org For information on the LCI 713

Now on **Facebook!** Please join our group:

"Remembering the LCI Vets"

CORRECTIONS FROM LAST ISSUE:

Page 23: The caption of the top image misstated the LCI number of the third ship in the column. The LCI 422 (not the LCI 22) was trailing the LCI 442.

Page 26: The name of a sailor who was killed in action aboard the LCI 94 was misspelled. The correct spelling is Jack DeNunzio.

"THE ELSIE ITEM"

NUMBER 91, August 2015

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. Zach S. Morris, Editor (*John P. Cummer, Editor Emeritus*). Any material for possible publication should be sent to the Editor, preferably by email (morrisza23@gmail.com).

A WORD FROM THE OLD MAN



OK, Shipmates! Don't let this issue of *Elsie Item* blow out of your hand!

Yep, it's a bit lighter than usual and there's a good reason for that. Our editor Zach put out an especially large issue last time in order to include some of the great material he had been sent. I know from the many comments I have read that you appreciated it, but now, finances being what they are with us, it's necessary to make up for the extra cost of that issue with a bit fewer pages this time.

Maybe that's just a good lead into a plea with all of you to not only be sure you are current in your dues but also to consider something like a significant, large donation to the LCI Association so that we can keep on sharing our wartime experiences just a bit longer. Wish I had a nice catchy slogan to launch a campaign for added financial support, but I really don't, so, from me, it has to be something like "Hey, guys, this Association is really important to all of us – without it there would be a great void in our collective memories. Look around to see if you can't find a couple of bucks (or even a couple of thousand bucks!) to help keep this ship afloat just as long as possible!"

And along with that incredibly effective plea for your financial support (ahem), comes the opportunity I have to share with you the very good news that, thanks to diligent, brilliant work by Zach and Ken Breivik, a brand-new LCI website is coming soon! Unless I'm mistaken, you might just hear a little more about it somewhere else in this issue, but, since this little piece usually gets put on one of the first pages, I just can't pass up the chance to be the one who brings you the good news. We are indebted to these men who have worked so hard to bring about an effective, additional tool for communication among us and to anyone who wants to know a bit more about our tough, tiny ships and the men who sailed in them.

Finally, my friends, for this time, remember that our Charleston reunion is just around the corner. Some rating outfit has just named Charleston as the nicest city in the United States! Come and find out why – and find out again why LCIers are the nicest people in the world!

John Cummer

We Say Goodbye to Rita France...

Rita K. France, mother of our Vice President John France, recently passed away on May 2. Her loving family surrounded her when she took her last breath at 10:20 PM. She was 93.



Rita was born on August 27, 1921 in Avella, Pennsylvania. She was one of nine children of the late Joseph and Veronica Brozier Rector.

Surviving her are four sons; David France of Wintersville, Jerry (Connie) France of Cape May, NJ, Eric (Chris) France of Columbus and John (Pam) France of Tucson, Arizona, and three daughters; Maureen (Tony Walsh) France of Cincinnati, Carol Secoy of Chillicothe and Rita (Bob) Scruton of Anchorage, Alaska, as well as thirteen grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

She was laid to rest next to her husband, Frank France, of the LCI 540, on May 7.

*"She was an LCler
to the end, just like
my father."*

—John France



**Frank and Rita France
during World War II.**

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 35
Earl William Eichorn

LCI 452
Glee E. Bridges

LCI 487
Vernon Haslup

LCI 545
Bernard A. Clark

LCI 67
Jack Vernon Higgins

LCI 471
Lawrence Hermes

LCI 492
Thomas B. Mayes

LCI 596
Robert “Sunshine”
Fairfield

LCI 76 and 588
Paul Freeman

LCI 472
Barnett J. Axelrod

LCI 514
Albert Technow

LCI 606
William Lewis

LCI 237
William T. Patton

LCI 472
Robert E. Coburn

LCI 519
Joseph E. Weisel

LCI 612
Lewis Lees

LCI 337
Vernon J. Dreibelbis

LCI 712
Henry J. Alberico

LCI 345
George Rush

LCI 804 and 1098
LeRoy Foley

LCI 349
Lawrence J. Campbell

LCI 812
Hal Bleyhl

LCI 373
Albert D. DiVincenzo

LCI 814
Lee Toms

LCI 407
Manuel Lebovitz

LCI 814
Robert Short

LCI 437
Andrew M. Rauen

LCI 1032
Harold Petke

LCI 449
Leo Bedell
(Silver Star)

LCI 1077
Ross Fragale



JOINT REUNION

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION & UNITED STATES LST ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 17-20, 2015 • CHARLESTON PLAZA HOTEL, CHARLESTON SOUTH CAROLINA

Thursday, September 17, 2015

4:00–8:00 PM Registration in the hotel lobby.

Arrival and Reunion Registration.

Meals are on your own.

Board Members attending meetings between 2:00 and 4:00 PM may check-in prior to 4:00 PM. A list of LCI and LST Board Members will be provided to the hotel's desk attendant.

7:00 PM–8:00 PM LCI Financial/Budget Meeting

USS LCI National Association Member Meeting [open to all members]

8:00 PM–9:00 PM..... LST Financial/Budget Meeting

United States LST Association Member Meeting [open to all members]

Friday, September 18, 2015

7:30–9:00 AM Breakfast

After breakfast, tours will depart from the Charleston Plaza Hotel East Entrance.

OPTION A

Friday, September 18, 2015 [Tour Option A]

HISTORIC CHARLESTON TOUR • \$35.00 per person

10:00 AM Depart

Tour Charleston, SC one of the most beautiful and historic cities in the South. Your tour will begin at your hotel where you will board your motor coach for a privately guided drive through the city's historic district. Throughout the tour, your licensed guide will recount over 300 years of Charleston's long and colorful history from 1670 to present day with a blend of knowledge, wit, and humor. Topics discussed will include Charleston's role in Colonial America, the American Revolution, the southern Antebellum Era, the Civil War, and its current day status as one of top travel destinations in World.

Some of the landmarks you will see include the Battery, Rainbow Row, St. Michaels Church, the College of Charleston, and South Carolina's famed military academy the Citadel. Your guide will also point out early period houses in Mazyck-Wraggborough and Harleston Village as well as magnificent public buildings like The Old Exchange and Provost Dungeon and the famous "Four Corners of Law" at the intersection of Meeting and Broad Street. At the Battery, we will also stop for a brief walk through the park and some photo opportunities of Charleston's scenic harbor. Your tour will end at the Old City Market where you will have time for shopping, browsing, and lunch on your own at one of Charleston's many fine restaurants.

12:00 PM Free time in the Old City Market for lunch on your own, shopping and browsing

3:00 PM End tour at the Charleston Plaza Hotel East Entrance

OPTION B

Friday, September 18, 2015 [Tour Option B]

PATRIOTS POINT TOUR • \$45.00 per person

10:00 AM Depart

Tour Patriots Point, one of the world's largest naval and maritime museums. Visit the USS Yorktown, the famous fighting lady of World War II; the Destroyer Laffey, a participant in the World War II D-Day landings at Normandy; the Vietnam Era Naval Support Base with its Sea Cobra and Huey helicopters; and the newly renovated Congressional Medal of Honor museum.

2:00 PM End tour at the Charleston Plaza Hotel East Entrance

OPTION C

Friday, September 18, 2015 [Tour Option C]

SPIRIT OF CAROLINA DINNER CRUISE • \$105.00 per person

6:15 PM Depart for Patriots Point

7:00 PM SPIRIT OF CAROLINA DINNER CRUISE

Cruise Charleston's beautiful harbor by moon light aboard the 100' luxury yacht, Spirit of Carolina. Enjoy the unique and beautiful sights of our harbor at sunset as well as a delicious dinner including entertainment from live and local musicians. Your 4 course dinner is made to order using fresh local ingredients and entrée choices may be made at the table. Alcoholic beverages and optional dessert menus are on your own.

Sample Dinner Menu:

*Charleston She-Crab Soup and Spirit Signature Salad with port wine vinaigrette
Choice of Entrée [Seasonal and locally inspired Beef, Seafood, Chicken or Vegetarian dishes]*

*Chef's selection of potatoes, rice, fresh seasonal vegetables,
and freshly baked breads*

Lowcountry Pecan Pie • Iced Water, Tea, or Coffee

9:30 PM End dinner cruise and depart for hotel

10:00 PM End tour at the Charleston Plaza Hotel East Entrance

Saturday, September 19, 2015

7:30–9:00 AM..... Breakfast

After breakfast, tours will depart from the hotel lobby.

OPTION A

Saturday, September 19, 2015 (Option A)

THE CONFEDERATE SUBMARINE, H. L. HUNLEY • \$45.00 per person

10:00 AM Depart

On February 17, 1864, the Confederate Submarine, *H. L. Hunley*, successfully sank the Union warship, the *Housatonic*, in Charleston Harbor by ramming it. After this successful foray she also sank with all of her crew to the bottom of the Atlantic where she remained until August 8, 2000. On this auspicious day after months of planning and work by archeologists from the state and National Park Service, divers and marine engineers, she was successfully raised and taken to a special tank at the Warren Lasch Conservation Center in North Charleston. Today we will have the opportunity to view this 19th century marvel as the archeologists continue their research and preserve this time capsule.

12:30 PM End tour at the Charleston Plaza East Entrance

OPTION B

Saturday, September 19, 2015 (Option B)

MAGNOLIA GARDENS TOUR • \$50.00 per person

9:00 AM Depart

Carved from a Cypress Swamp by the Rev. John Drayton in the early 19th century Magnolia Gardens is considered one of the most beautiful romantic gardens in the world. As you stroll with your private guide through the lush garden pathways, these unique landscapes will captivate you. After touring the gardens board the Nature Train, which will take you into part of the Audubon Swamp Garden, home to scores of water loving creatures, and past the newly restored Slave Cabins, which interpret African American life on the plantation. While traveling through the old rice fields, you may even run into the nostalgic American alligator and will have the opportunity to view the abundant bird population of the Lowcountry.

12:15 PM End tour at the Charleston Plaza East Entrance

2:00 PM Memorial service held in Charleston Plaza Hotel Ballroom

5:00 PM Reception

6:30 PM Banquet and Big Band Entertainment in Charleston Plaza Hotel Ballroom

Dinner Options \$50.00 per person–Sliced Sirloin of Beef • Grilled Atlantic Salmon • Chicken Florentine

Sunday, September 20, 2015

7:30–9:00 AM..... Breakfast

Farewells & Departures

**USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION AND UNITED STATES LST ASSOCIATION
FORM A: ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM**

Please submit Form A along with check for registration to Nehemiah Communications.

Nehemiah Communications • 101 Rice Bent Way, Suite 6 • Columbia, SC 29229

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 NEHEMIAH COMMUNICATIONS in the form of check or money order. Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. Returned checks will be charged a \$20.00 fee. **Registration forms and payment should be received by mail on or before Friday, August 14, 2015; however, reservations may be accepted after this date if space is available.** Please make a copy of these forms for your records. We look forward to seeing you in Charleston!

TOURS and BANQUET

CITY TOUR FRIDAY:..... \$35.00 x _____ persons = Total \$ _____

PATRIOTS POINT FRIDAY:..... \$45.00 x _____ persons = Total \$ _____

Lunch provided for additional \$12.00 per person

DINNER CRUISE FRIDAY:..... \$105.00 x _____ persons = Total \$ _____

HUNLEY TOUR SATURDAY:..... \$45.00 x _____ persons = Total \$ _____

MAGNOLIA GARDENS TOUR SATURDAY:..... \$50.00 x _____ persons = Total \$ _____

BANQUET (dinner) SATURDAY:..... \$50.00 x _____ persons = Total \$ _____

Dinner Options (check one): Sliced Sirloin of Beef Grilled Atlantic Salmon Chicken Florentine

PER PERSON REGISTRATION FEE (Includes Hospitality Room and administrative expenses):

Registration..... \$35.00 x _____ persons = Total \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE \$ _____

Total Amount Payable to: **Nehemiah Communications • 101 Rice Bent Way, Suite 6 • Columbia, SC 29229**

CHARLESTON PLAZA HOTEL

4770 GOER DRIVE • N. CHARLESTON, SC 29406

The Charleston Plaza Hotel is conveniently located at 4770 Goer Drive, N. Charleston, strategically located near the historic downtown district and the Charleston International Airport. The hotel is approximately 3 miles from the Charleston International Airport. If you are driving, please call the hotel directly for accurate driving instructions. This hotel offers 289 spacious rooms. Each room features a coffee/tea maker, iron/ironing board, hairdryer, and free wireless high speed internet access. Recreation enthusiasts will enjoy an indoor/outdoor heated pool, fitness facility and golf courses nearby. The Charleston Plaza Hotel is a non-smoking hotel. Handicapped rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservations.

The hotel provides complimentary parking for its guests. Check-in time is 4:00 PM on Thursday, September 17, 2015 and check-out time is 12:00 PM on Sunday, September 20, 2015. Moniker's, open 6:00 AM–2:00 PM and 5:00 PM–11:00 PM, features a hearty full breakfast everyday with it la carte dining available as well. Monikers Bar, open 4:00 PM–12:00 AM, offers American cuisine and local favorites. Enjoy your favorite libations in a fun and inviting pub atmosphere.

The Charleston Plaza Hotel offers complimentary airport shuttle service to and from the Charleston International Airport . The shuttle runs every 20 minutes on the hour to and from the airport. Please call [843] 747-1900 upon arrival then wait by taxi/shuttle stands outside of baggage claim for the shuttle to arrive. Space is limited on complimentary services, so you may want to make other arrangements. The hotel shuttle takes all guests to and from the Tanger Outlet area, if desired. The hotel also provides round trip shuttle service to downtown Charleston for \$10.00 per person. You must sign up upon check in. Departure times are 10:00 AM / 2:00 PM / 6:00 PM / 9:00 PM, last pick-up is at 9:15 PM.

The hotel offers complimentary RV parking for guests staying at the hotel. Should you need full hook-ups contact the Charleston KOA Campground at [843] 797-1045 or [800] 562-5812. They are located at 9494 Highway 78, Ladson, SC 29456, which is approximately 11 miles from the hotel. Make your reservations as soon as possible due to limited space and availability.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair for the reunion, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs 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.
- The Hotel Rate is available 3 days pre & 3 days post reunion dates.
- Hotel reservations may be made using the following link as directed below:
- Hotel Registration Website **thecharlestonplazahotel.com**
(Click on reservations, select dates add LCILST in the Group Code box, and select room preferences.)



FORM B: HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

MAIL HOTEL FORMS AND PAYMENT TO:

CHARLESTON PLAZA HOTEL • 4770 GOER DRIVE • N. CHARLESTON, SC 29406

FAX FORMS TO: [843] 744-6108-ATTN: RESERVATIONS • PHONE [888] 747-1900

Hotel Reservations website: thecharlestonplazahotel.com. Click on reservations, select dates and enter LCILST in the Group Code box. Select Room preferences.

JOINT REUNION of the USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION & UNITED STATES LST ASSOCIATION

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

REUNION DATES: SEPTEMBER 17-20, 2015

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PH. NUMBER (_____) _____ ARRIVAL DATE _____ APPROX. TIME _____ DEP. DATE _____

_____ # OF ROOMS NEEDED _____ # OF PEOPLE IN ROOM HANDICAP ACCESS

KING BED OR 2 DOUBLE BEDS *[In the event room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.]*

HOTEL ROOM RATE: [\$121 + 13.5% tax] = \$137.34 *Nightly rate includes breakfast buffet for up to 2 people in the hotel restaurant.*

CUT OFF DATE: August 14, 2015 *Late reservations will be processed based on space availability at a higher rate.*

HOTEL CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 72 hours prior to arrival.

All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

AMERICAN EXPRESS DINERS CLUB VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

PLEASE PRINT NAME AS YOU WANT YOUR NAME TAG TO READ: _____

CHECK GROUP AFFILIATION: USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION UNITES STATES LST ASSOCIATION

CHECK TYPE OF SHIP: LSM LSMR LCI LCI(FF) LCI(G) LCI(L) LCI(M) LCI(R) SHIP NUMBER _____

IF YOU HAVE A SEATING PREFERENCE, OTHER THAN WITH YOUR SHIP, PLEASE SPECIFY _____

SPOUSE NAME _____ GUEST NAME(S) _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ 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 (_____) _____

REUNION REFUNDS AND CANCELLATIONS:

Nehemiah Communications will offer a full refund to those who cancel on or before Friday, August 14, 2015. All reservations received after August 14, 2015 are non-refundable due to vendor commitments. Please remember that reunion registration [Form A] is handled through Nehemiah Communications [803-865-5665] and hotel reservations [Form B] are handled through the Charleston Plaza Hotel [888-747-1900]. Registration refunds may take four to six weeks after the reunion. Thank you!

MILLION DOLLAR BELLYACHE

By
Lou Scolnik, LCI 776



USS LCI (L) 776 commissioning crew photo on August 3, 1944, at Commercial Iron Works, Portland, OR. (Officers—from bottom to top) Commanding Officer Lt. Eric Karlson; Executive Officer E. O. Schwartz; Engineering Officer Ed Murphy; Commissary and Communication Officer Louis "Lou" Scolnik. (Official Navy photo, Courtesy Lou Scolnik)

Among my experiences in World War II, this is one that bears re-telling.

We left Pearl Harbor and were on our way to the Marshall Islands with a flotilla of LCIs and a 20 year old crew member (I was 23!) developed stomach pains. There was not one doctor on the 12 ships so our pharmacist's mate had a voice radio conference with the pharmacist mates on all the other ships and they came up with a group diagnosis of appendicitis. Even though we were a day and a half from our temporary destination of Majuro Island, the Flotilla commander, fearful of a bursting appendix, told us to drop out of formation to wait for a Navy PBY seaplane to set down near us and take the patient to the Majuro Island base Hospital. A rendezvous area was designated and we then left the other ships to await the PBY that was sent to pick up the sick passenger. The sea was choppy but the pilot maneuvered well and made a safe "landing." All we had on our small LCI was a small dinghy and we put the patient aboard with our 2 best rowers, lowered the boat, and they rowed to the floating plane. He was taken aboard and the dinghy came back to our ship. We stood by awaiting the plane's take off and unfortunately a big swell hit the starboard wingtip fracturing it at a point 8" from the end.

We communicated with the PBY crew by flashing light and asked them for instructions. They flashed back, " Sink the damn thing, we've had it for more than two years!! So they inflated their yellow life raft, deplaned with the patient after punching holes in the plane to help it sink so that it would not constitute a floating navigational hazard, and the pilot and his one crew-member together with the almost forgotten patient were paddling toward our LCI. Soon after they clambered aboard, our gunnery crews, with their relatively small caliber 20 mm anti aircraft guns with which the LCI

was equipped, were eagerly shooting up the damaged million dollar PBY and down it sank. Without waiting for the Gunnery crew to complete its work, the quartermaster climbed up on the conning tower, a place reserved for painting symbols of enemy planes that were shot down, and he started to paint our first trophy of the war, an American PBY! No other plane was shot down by the LCI 776 during our entire Pacific experience! Of course, the Captain was not amused.

Our Pharmacist's Mate tended to his patient for the next day and a half by keeping his abdomen well iced, the two PBY personnel were having a great time eating the fresh fruit and vegetables we had, having stocked up before leaving Pearl Harbor (They had been in the Islands on a long tour of duty and had not had that kind of fresh provisions for over a year), and when we arrived at Majuro, "Doc" and his young patient immediately went over to the Base Hospital. Half of our crew were the guests of the two PBY personnel on the base where Actress Carole Landis was appearing with a USO group.

Two hours later, the pharmacist and his ward returned to the ship with the report that the "patient" was not suffering from appendicitis and no appendectomy was required. It turns out that he had neglected to tell anyone that he had been severely constipated and had not "been to the bathroom" for four days. The hospital had its way of relieving that situation and the symptoms disappeared.

That turned out to be a million dollar bellyache.

Lou Scolnik, LCI 776 ■

A Bulletin From the Editor

ATTENTION MEMBERS!

- **Brand New LCI Web Site Coming Soon**
- **Now pay "Elsie Item" annual subscription dues online**
- **Submit a story from any experience aboard an LCI**
- **All U.S. Navy Amphibious Force veterans are welcome to join**
- **Wanted: Leyte, Philippines Stories For Next Issue**
- **V-J Day 70th Anniversary – August 14, 1945**



Nehemiah Communications and I have recently been working on a brand new LCI web site. Its creation is currently under way, and will launch in the coming weeks. Through PayPal, it will now include the option for new members to join, and existing members to pay their annual subscription dues online.

One of the goals of the web site is to expand the "LCI Sailors Killed in Action in World War II" portion. We'd like to add the ability for people visiting the site to submit authentic photos, documents, and stories of the deceased sailors. We'd also like to include information for those wounded in action as well. But right now, our resources are extremely limited. It will cost a bit of money to make this happen.

We need your help. Please consider making a donation to the USS LCI National Association, c/o Nehemiah Communications to make this goal a reality. The Associate Members of the Association feel it is our personal responsibility to do everything we can to preserve the memories of those brave LCI sailors who sacrificed so much for this country. This is one of the ways we can do that.

For the next "Elsie Item" issue (November 2015), we would like to include a few stories from LCI veterans that were at Leyte, Philippines in October/November/December 1944, in commemoration of the Battle of Leyte that took place almost 71 years ago. Please reach out to the editor for stories – morrisza23@gmail.com

Your Editor,

Zach

"ELSIE ITEM" DEADLINES

- | | |
|---|---|
| • FEBRUARY ISSUE
Deadline: January 10 | • AUGUST ISSUE
Deadline: July 10 |
| • MAY ISSUE
Deadline: April 10 | • NOVEMBER ISSUE
Deadline: October 20 |

"How Wonderful! How Beautiful!"

"How wonderful, how beautiful, when brothers and sisters get along! It's like costly anointing oil flowing down head and beard, flowing down Aaron's beard, flowing down the collar of his priestly robes. It's like the dew on Mount Hermon flowing down the slopes of Zion. Yes, that's where God commands the blessing, ordains eternal life."
Psalm 133 (The Message)

There's a story that a man died and went to heaven and was given a tour by the Angel Gabriel. Everywhere songs were raised in praise and suddenly the harmony that had been hidden in life made sense. The four-part songs and cathedral organs, the guitars and drums, the rustic hymns and African chants, the Latin rhythms, the bells and the carols, the white keys and the black keys, and the tapping feet and the beating hearts all blended together in a harmony that was never heard on earth but always intended. It all worked together and it was all good. But, the man couldn't help but notice that far away, on the edge of heaven, there was a little cabin. Curious, he walked toward it with the angel at his elbow, and looked inside. There, huddling quietly together, on their knees, their hands clasped in prayer, was a group that seemed oblivious to the rest of heaven. The man turned toward the angel Gabriel with a quizzical expression. Gabriel smiled and explained softly, "They're the Exclusive Apostolic Old Order Preservationist Straight-away Cox Witnesses of the Apocalyptic Mysteries." "Why are we whispering?" the man asked. "Because," Gabriel replied, "they think they're the only ones here."

Living as God's people puts us in tension with the world, but not with one another. We are not to retreat from the world, even though we live in a different fashion. We belong to God. We do not belong to ourselves. When the ship is in danger of sinking, it's time to jump into the lifeboats. There is no first class or third class in a lifeboat. There are only all of us, sinking fast, and someone is throw-ing us a lifeline. Are we going to refuse it because it's made out of the wrong kind of rope?

When our founding fathers signed the Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Franklin stood up and said, "Gentlemen, now we must all hang together or assuredly we shall all hang separately." Our national motto is *e pluribus unum*, which means "out of the many, one." Again, our founding fathers knew that we must forever be "The United States of America." My state's flag proclaims, "United we stand—divided we fall."

The Psalmist understood these things when he cried out, "How wonderful, how beautiful, when brothers

and sisters get along!"—"when kindred live together in unity" it says in the NIV version. He

was speaking of unity. It's not about union when you are bonded with someone with whom you may not have a common bond. Nor is it about uniformity, when everyone looks alike and thinks alike. Neither is it unanimity, where everybody always agrees on everything. Unity is oneness in heart and similarity of purpose. We seem to have forgotten that in our land and in our dealings with one another. I believe it is what God desires of us and what we must have in order to survive as a nation and as an organization. I am excited that the LCI and LST associations have agreed to unite for this year's reunion in hope that the event is the beginning of even greater cooperation and an eventual merger into an Amphibious Association. Indeed, I believe that this joint effort will mean survival and assure a viable future for our groups and others that may choose to join us in the future.

I read about a man one time who went out on a deep-sea fishing boat who couldn't swim. He caught an enormous fish, and in his excitement to pull it into the boat, he fell overboard. He cried out, "Save me, I cannot swim!" The captain of the boat very calmly reached out, grabbed the man by the arm, and gave a big pull; but he didn't know it was an artificial arm, and the arm came off! The man continued to kick and splash around crying for help. The captain reached out again; this time he grabbed his leg and gave a heave, but the leg came off because it was a wooden leg. The man in the water went under again and he came up in a panic, yelling for help. Still calm, the captain grabbed the man by the hair of his head and gave a tug; but the man was wearing a toupee and it came off. At that point the captain looked at the man in the water and said, "Mister, if you won't stick together, I can't help you!"

Even God cannot help us if we don't stick together. If we are going to be victorious in life and accomplish all that God wants us to accomplish, and be all that God wants us to be, we must come together, we must work together, and we must stay together. Somebody said, "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; but working together is success."

"How wonderful, how beautiful, when God's people get along!"

Agape,
Mike



USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

CUT HERE

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 \$35.00 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: _____

Alternate/Relative's E-mail Address: _____

(This is so we have a family member or friend we can contact if we cannot reach you)

Name of Alternate Contact: _____ Relationship to contact: _____

Occupation or Former Occupation: _____

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? _____ Email Address: _____

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

Please send this application with your check (**\$35**) made payable to:

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Mail to:

USS LCI National Association
c/o Nehemiah Communications, Inc.
101 Rice Bent Way, Unit #6
Columbia, SC 29229

Your Officers and Board of Directors

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

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

*Attention LCI Veterans!
Want to tell your story?*

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OFFICES AND SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED BY

NEHEMIAH COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

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101 Rice Bent Way, #6
Columbia, SC 29229

USS LCI 358



*Submitted by
Steve Dudrow, for
his father James
Gilbert Dudrow
USS LCI(L)-358*

