

September 2017



Elsie Item

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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 interested in the history of LCIs.

Joe Flynn, Editor. Any material for possible publication should be sent to the Editor, preferably by email (joeglo@msn.com) but snail mail is OK too.

We are always looking for stories and memories of your LCI service. If writing is a chore, draft one of your young relatives. If they are a student, perhaps they could also do a paper on your wartime experiences. So, whatever it takes, get it down and send it in. We need your history.

Stories/ Letters

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Cover Photo: LC(FF) 988, the Flagship of Gunboat Support Group 52.5.

Date: Jan. 12-18, 1945. Location appears to be off Maui, Hawaiian Islands.

Rehearsal for Iwo Jima Invasion, February 19, 1945.

Checkout the new and improved USS LCI National Association Website

www.usslci.org Back issues of Elsie Item are there too for your enjoyment

www.amphibiousforces.org For information on the LCI 713

<https://www.facebook.com/USSLASIL1091/> For information on the LSIL 1091

“Elsie Item” Notice: The USS LCI National Association is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted to the Editor for publication. Time and resources do not permit the ability to check each story, therefore, we rely on the author to research each article.

President's Corner

September 2017



Ahoy LCIers! I have exciting news. By the time you receive this Elsie Item, we will probably have our new website – ***usslci.org*** online for your viewing pleasure. It is a product of Mark Galik who took time out from his busy work schedule to perform this work for us pro bono. With guidance from his father - Stan Galik, one of our Association's Directors, Mark has produced a very professional, attractive, slick and functional website. Stan & Mark were tasked with designing and producing a website that has a search function. This enables anyone to search all archived Elsie Items for a specific LCI hull number or a name of an LCIer with instant results. I was so impressed with their prototype website that I tasked our intrepid design team to expand the search capabilities for any document or photo that we upload onto the site. This has been done.

Our website, in effect, will be an online resource center for anyone interested in LCIs and their crews. We are only limited by the time it takes to upload materials. We have unlimited band space on our website. We have thousands of photos and documents to upload that our research teams mined from the National Archives years ago. Our Pacific Theater Historian – Dennis Blocker organized this material into individual folders by LCI hull number. They are ready to upload. We have large stories, diaries and manuscripts that were too big to publish in Elsie Items. They too can be uploaded onto our site. LCIers, family & friends can submit photos and documents to add to our collection.

We do not consider the new website as a final product. It is a work in progress. We can make improvements to it at any time to best preserve the legacy of the LCIs. For now, enjoy your ability to search all Elsie Items since the formation of our Association. Much more is coming!

John France, President, USS LCI National Association

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

OUR AWESOME GOD NASB

Psalm 19:1, Genesis 1:1, John 1:3, Job 38-40,
Job 38:2, Job 40:4, John 3:16, Hebrews 11:16,
John 14:6

As I viewed the total eclipse of the sun on Monday 8/21/17 on my TV, I was caught up with the awesomeness of our great God. The Psalmist writing in Psalm 19:1 begins "The Heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands." No astronomer or scientist of any degree could have pin pointed the time and path of this memorable wonder if God had not set the time table. Genesis 1:1 says "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." I believe God, the father and God the son were both present because John 1:3 tells us "All things came into being through Him..." (the word is the son). My Bible and my belief tell me that no "blob" or "mysterious explosion" produced the marvels that we are, and the vastness and complexity of what we see around us, over us and beneath us in the earth and sea as well. During the eclipse I heard "Oh my God" quite a number of times. Was this a recognition of who was moving the moon to block the sun from view?

Was there a sense of awe in seeing God's hand at work? I believe so.

On 8/26/17 as I write, the awesomeness of The God of the universe becomes even more real to me. Who can unleash the power of a hurricane such as "Harvey" now in its course of one like "Katrina"? No human or group of people with all their scientific credentials can provide the power to start or stop such a force.

My mind goes to the dialogue between God and Job in Job 38-40. In Job 38:2 God speaks to Job saying "Who is this that darkens

counsel By words without knowledge?" Then God proceeds to educate him while he, Job, sits in silence until Job 40:4 when Job says "Behold I am insignificant. What can I reply to You?..." Job considered himself insignificant in the presence of the Awesome God. But God did not consider Job to be so. He was very mindful of Job's suffering and loss. In reading the account of his latter days I see God very beneficially active in his life. (God is no man's debtor).

Job 38-40 gives a good description of "Who's Who" of creation and the keeper thereof.

What amazes me most is that this Awesome God loves me and gives me not only this life and all of its beauties, He also gives eternal life and the promise of Heaven. In John 3:16, it tells me "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

During and after periods of devastation we often hear the words "Our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims and their family. It seems to be a call to prayer. We go to God. The Bible says in Hebrews 11:6, "...he who comes to God must believe that HE is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." Jesus in John 14:6 said "...no one comes to the Father except through me." All believers have access to the awesome God through Him no matter who they are.

Ebenezer (I Samuel 7:12)

RM-1/C Abe Laurenzo LCI 47, 409



In Memoriam

LCI 40
Dallas Thompson

LCI 70
Gilbert Ortiz

LCI 70
John Reulet

LCI 366
Robert Norton

LCI 419
Charles Lupsha

LCI 440
Galen B. Leach

LCI 442
Elmer Burge

LCI 442
Jefferson Davis Hughes, Jr.

LCI 449
Daniel Skluzacek

LCI 461
Pasqualle Maietta

LCI 526
Edgar Biscotti

LCI 526 & 1001
Keith Owen

LCI 588
James M. Smith

LCI 607 & 424
George Casey

LCI 613
Robert Byheny

LCI 642 & 650
Joe Harper

LCI 652
Gordon "Reese" Rogers

LCI 767
Donald Exter

LCI 801
Edward J. Brink

LCI 1023
Marcus Rempp

LCI 1069
Lewis H. Mueller

LCI 1084
John L. Blair

LCI (?)
Kenneth Norton



North to Alaska With Flotilla 3

One of the good things about LCI research is the fact that LCI's were organized into "groups" and "flotillas." If information on a particular LCI is hard to find the search can be broadened to find the other LCI's it served with. For example, information on my brother's LCI(G)347 was hard to find. But I did meet LCI sailors from other ships in his group and flotilla. These men searched their records and provided a wealth of information. A number of them even sent copies of their memoirs and books that chronicled their service and by association the service of my brother's ship.

The following article is gleaned from one of these personal reports, the "*Monster Seven-Seven, The WW II Deck Log of an LCI,*" by R. William Clark, one of the ship's officers, and from the book "*The Capture of Attu; A WWII Battle, as told by the men who were there,*" by Lt. Robert J. Mitchell.

Two amphibious invasions early in WW II that received little notice at the time, and scant coverage since, took place in the Aleutian Islands, then an American Territory off the coast of Alaska. Not long after Pearl Harbor, the Japanese occupied the Aleutian Islands of Attu and Kiska on June 7, 1942. At the time, the United States was rebuilding naval forces and increasing ground forces. The occupation of the Aleutians by Japan was seen as an affront to US pride but was not viewed as an immediate threat. Planning to evict the Japanese forces, however, began to take shape almost immediately.

"Operation Landgrab," to regain control of the westernmost island Attu was the first of two. "Operation Cottage," the second action

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was mounted to take back the island of Kiska. Numerous explanations have been offered for the lack of coverage then or in the years since the events. First, the US did not wish to publicize the Japanese invasion and control of American territory, lest it add to already heightened fears in the general public.

Secondly, since the US was still building its war readiness, some of the early actions in those invasions were not worthy of praise.

Planning for the invasion got off to a bad start. Ground forces selected for the effort were the US Army's 7th Infantry Division, which at the time had been training for desert warfare at Camp Luis Obispo, CA for later deployment to Africa. Now they had to shift gears to train for Arctic conditions.

Overconfidence also added to the difficulties. Military planners thought the recapture of Attu would be a three-day operation, or less. Consequently, infantry troops did not have sufficient cold weather uniforms and equipment and were landed with only one day's K rations. Before the invasion, very little was known about Attu; it had never been mapped by the military. Only the coastline was known and weather conditions were a mystery and the muddy, soggy terrain prevented the use of mechanized equipment. But despite substantial obstacles, US was eventually successful in regaining control of Attu.

Then it was on to Kiska. Amphibious training for this operation began at Fort Ord, at Monterey, CA. And this is where Flotilla 3 entered the picture with LCI's practicing landing and recovering troops from the beaches. After this joint Army-Navy training, Flotilla 3 headed north, first to San Francisco for drydock and a haze gray paint job, and Mare Island for ammo, then on to Pt. Angeles,

WA. From there they sailed to Seattle where they moored at Pier 4, Berth 9, for liberty call for the crew and briefings for the officers.

On July 24, 1943 at 0810 Flotilla 3 headed north to Alaska. The sailed in two parallel columns 100 yards apart with five ships in each column 50 yards behind each other.

They sailed up the inland passage, with limited navigation aids and limited experience. And, during war years running lights were not permitted. Next morning, the ten LCI's were still in two columns but now there were only two ships in one column and eight in the other. Needless to say, the Skippers were counseled.

Navigation continued to be a problem as most of the trip was made in thick fog. The first night the 345 hit the 346 a glancing blow. Hours later the 79 and the 80 just missed serious damage with the 79 approaching the 80 at a 90-degree angle. Both ships backed down before collision. Then on the fifth night out the Flotilla made contact with two destroyers who escorted the group for the remainder of the trip. August 7, the Group arrived at Adak, a US controlled Aleutian Island.

On 0659 on August 16 they located their landing zone, "Green Beach," Kiska. There was concern in landing since the beach was made up of black rocks from baseball to Volleyball size. The ¼ inch steel hull held, but did pick up a few wrinkles. In 13 minutes they had unloaded 209 Army troops. The next day the 77 made five beaching's to land 1,270 troops, 840 of whom were Canadians. In all there were 34,000 US and Canadian troops in this operation. Most of the Japanese had left the island; 5,000 were evacuated in the fog while US picket ships were refueling. During

beaching, there was no gunfire or opposition. Casualties were low with most caused by friendly fire due to Canadian and US troops in the fog mistaking each other for the enemy. In the end, the remaining Japanese were routed and the Aleutians were back in American control.

The operations to regain Attu and Kiska provided valuable lessons for our War planners. On Attu they had underestimated the training and tenacity of the Japanese soldiers who had excellent cold weather clothing to ward off the Artic winds and waterproof footwear to deal with the constant mud and water of the islands. The Japanese had dug in on key vantage points on Attu and were equipped with a much higher ration of machine guns than normal infantry. And for the most part, they fought to the death. On Attu 2,351 Japanese dead were accounted for and 3,929 American casualties and 549 KIA. Many of the US casualties were due to frostbite and trench foot, and these were attributable to lack of Artic clothing and water proof footwear.

Now perhaps, it is more understandable why Operation Landgrab and Operation Cottage have received so little coverage. *J. Flynn*

Lack of news coverage was not limited to the Aleutians; but applied to other LCI operations as well. LCI's use to drop and retrieve UDT (Underwater Demolition Teams) from occupied enemy shores days before invasions, for example, was blacked out in news reports so the enemy would not know our plans. LCI's were also used as decoys to draw enemy fire from island gun emplacements so they could be eliminated by big ships off shore; no coverage there either. *J. Flynn*



“Monster Seven-Seven” unleashes rockets at Peleliu, September 15, 1944. Flotilla 3 and 13 gunboats were there in support of the 1st Marine Corps Division. (U.S. Navy Photo)

The Rest of the Story

The photo above showing the LCI(G) 77 firing a fusillade of rockets through a cloud of smoke is one of the more popular WW II LCI pictures. It appears in the 2005 LCI Calendar issue in September. Converted to a Gunboat with the addition of 40 mm canons, 20 mms, a bunch of .50 caliber machine guns along the rails, and up to 504, 4.5-inch rocket tubes the 77 was armed and dangerous.

But rockets leaving the ship could also set the deck paint on fire. The 77 often had firehoses slightly open and handy to keep the decks wet, and to douse fires.

“The famous picture of the 77 at this moment was most dramatic with the flames and a cloud of steam obscuring the conn. The faulty placement of the launchers resulted in the blowing of 25 rockets completely out of their launchers. When they went off with only a couple left in the launchers behind there was

not enough weight to keep them in place. The deck paint was already on fire, so these rockets caught fire too as they rolled around in it. During the firing, all of us on deck had taken cover in #3 compartment. When we were told that the first range rockets were ready to fire there was an extra loud noise and the ship jumped. I was asking the talker to find out what happened when he said the bridge reported a rocket had fired from every port launcher and they were continuing firing. The crew grabbed fire hoses to put water on the fire. I got asbestos gloves from a 20 mm mount to use in picking up burning rockets rolling around in the fire and threw them over the side. This was very exciting and made a great picture but was really an illustration of a very large dangerous screwup.”

This excerpt is from the book, Monster Seven-Seven by LCDR. R. William Clark. The book was sent to me by Vito Colomussi, (dec.) a crewman on the LCI 77 and a good friend.

One Quick Rocket Attack

By Leon Fletcher

With great caution, three LCI(R)s approached the small Japanese outpost of San Felipe, on Luzon Island, Northern Philippines.

From the hideout, Japanese patrol boats had harassed allied forces for weeks. Then Vice Admiral Daniel E. Barbey, USN, Commander, Seventh Amphibious Force, South Pacific, ordered LCI(R) Group 20 to destroy the base.

It was an encampment of a few hundred enemy troops set in a narrow valley with high cliffs on both sides. Intelligence reports had no additional information.

But by cruising past, it appeared that the entire settlement extended just a couple hundred yards across the beach and back from the surfline. A small dock, about six buildings, and a radio tower were visible.

The attack was let by Lt. Cmdr. R.E. Sargent, commander of LCI(R) Group 20 – my boss. From the 20 ships under his command, he'd selected his flagship plus two other top ships to make the raid.

Sargent held a brief planning session for his ship's captains. The mission was simple; get in fast, launch rockets fast, get out fast.

Just after sunrise on January 29, 1944, the rocket ships moved in. They advanced in a line abreast, close to each other because of the narrow passage. They steamed at full speed – about 15 knots.

The ships' lookouts peered through binoculars, trying to spot soldiers, movement, danger. All was quiet.

When the ships were about 100 feet off shore, the commander gave the order, "All back – full!"

I relayed the order by short-range, high frequency voice radio.

As the vessels began moving astern, the commander ordered, "Fire all rockets!"

The firing was not in the usual timed sequence, typically a salvo every 30 seconds or so. On this attack, gunnery officers simply held down the firing keys to the rockets, launching them as fast as possible. Each ship fired all of its 420 rockets or so in less than 15 seconds.

The rapid firing produced considerable heat. On the bridge deck of the flagship, some 20 feet above the main deck where the rockets were mounted, my feet felt the heat through my heavy boots.

To protect their hearing everyone aboard stuffed cotton in their ears. Excess cotton was dropped on the bridge deck. It was so hot the bits of cotton smouldered, turned black.

The Japanese were completely surprised. Only a few were seen rushing out of some buildings. They did not return fire.

Our LCI(R)s were credited with sinking six patrol boats and two seaplanes, destroying a military radio station, killing or wounding "many" Japanese.

But the attack was not important enough to be written up in any of the major history books.

Author of this article is former Communications Officer, LCI(R) Group 20, former Lt. Cmdr., now a full time freelance writer. (From Elsie Item 26, 1998)

Leon Fletcher, also wrote, "Voyage of the 1091" on its cruise to San Diego in 1995 for the LCI Reunion.

Big Ed's S.O.S.

There are a lot of clichés about food, especially in the military, and usually the chow gets a bad rap. But then there are those who thought it was pretty good. My LCI brother and I are in that last group; we liked it. A few years ago, I met the cook from my brother's LCI 347. I never tasted his cooking but I he did have a well-seasoned sense of humor. He told me one time that he had saved the entire crew of the 347. When I asked, "How," he said, "I stopped cooking." And you may know Royal Wetzel, the cook on the LCI 70 who is also known for his sense of humor – and his baloney, (both kinds) that he brings to reunions for his LCI sailors.

One military menu staple is sure to have people lining up on both sides – they either love it, or they don't. But for those who love it, here is a recipe for **S.O.S**; known in more polite company as "Creamed Chip Beef on Toast." If you need to decipher S.O.S, just ask the nearest Elsie Item sailor; he'll know.

Recipe for S.O.S.

¼ lb Ground Beef (15 % fat) ----2 cups milk
1 T. Butter ---- 2 T. All-Purpose Flour
Salt and Pepper to taste – Hot Buttered Toast.

In a skillet, melt butter and brown the ground beef. Remove all but two tablespoons of fat from the skillet. Transfer meat to another dish and keep warm. Mix the flour with the fat in the skillet and stir until it becomes a smooth paste. Gradually add milk, and cook, stirring frequently, until the sauce reaches the thickness you prefer. Add the meat to the sauce and stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper. Serve over toast. Goes well with hash browns, strong black coffee, and sea stories. It may jog some memories, + -.

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It's All Wetz's Fault

By Joe Flynn.

At check in for our return flight from the Portland reunion, I forgot to remove one item from my jacket pocket – a green Kazoo given to me a few reunions back by Royal Wetzel. Those who have attended reunions with Wetz will remember him and his Kazoo. He is the cook from the LCI 70 who brings all the Pennsylvania Baloney and cheese for the hospitality room.

But I don't think the TSA Agent at the airport had ever seen a Kazoo before. At first, I thought I would demonstrate it for him, but decided against it. Did not want to scare people in the terminal.

Instead I told the Agent that I was a member of the Royal Wetzel Kazoo Marching Band. He seemed impressed, and waved me through. So, make a note to your air travel file – along with items to go in the checked baggage, such as pocket knives or small scissors, you better add Kazoos. It will save time and explanation.

Battleship Texas Closed to Public

The Battleship Texas, a museum that has been beleaguered by lack of resources, had to close to the public recently when holes in the hull overwhelmed the pumps already operating. Many historic naval ship museums across the country are threatened by deteriorating hulls due to lack of adequate revenue and a strong membership base.

Source: *Midway Currents*, publication of The USS Midway Museum in San Diego.

We know from experience the difficulty and costs in restoring our two WW II Ships, the LCI 713, in Portland, OR and the LISL 1091 in Eureka, CA.

AN LCI ACE

By LeRoy Olson, USS LCI(L) 966 &(L) 321

Not only did LCI(G) 70 ace out with five planes, but she survived both torpedo and kamikaze hits. Her exploits resulted in a Presidential Unit Citation.

Operation Toenail

The LCI(L) 70 started out as a troop carrier with Flotilla 5 training out of Noumea, New Caledonia, in the spring of 1943. In June she moved into the Guadalcanal area, standing GQ for red alerts and Japanese attacks, training on shore-to-shore troop movements, and getting ready for Operation Toenail aimed at taking the Munda Point airstrip on the island of New Georgia. On 6/30/43 the 70 landed troops on Rendova Island, which was in artillery range of Munda. The she shuttled around the Guadalcanal and New Georgia areas until 9/28/43 when she and the LCI(L)s 21, 22, and 23 were sent back to Noumea to be converted into gunboats.

Gunboat Conversion

The need was to stop barge traffic that by August in 1943 handled most of the Japanese supply supply and troop movements in the Solomon Islands. With operators skilled in night-time, in-shore navigation, the barges traveled by night and hid out under jungle cover in streams and coves by day. As they acquired more armor, the 40-mm fire from PT barge killers bounced off their sides. They outmaneuvered destroyer fire. Night travel allowed them to avoid air attacks. Too, the "Tokyo Express" challenge required the attention of all available fleet units. So, the LCIs, being available and expendable, were converted to go inshore and chase down and take out the barges and act as an armed escort

for small landing craft.

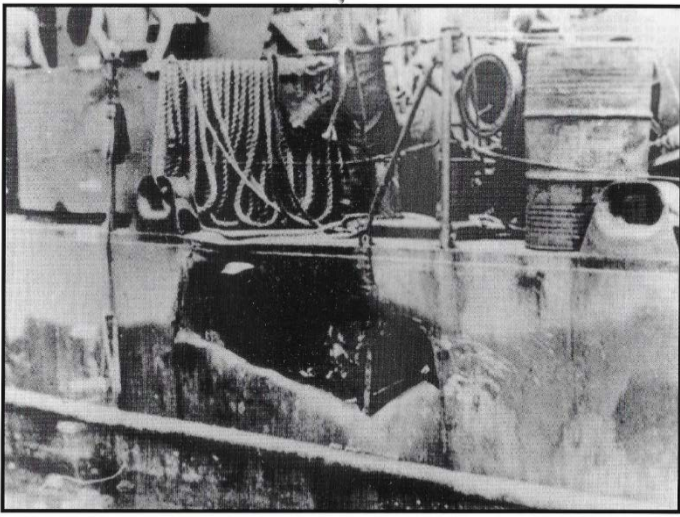
The gunboat conversions were made at ABSD #1 floating dry-dock in Noumea. The armaments varied. The LCI(G) 70 had a 40-mm on the bow, a 3"/50 mounted over the well deck, 4 20-mm (2 midship and 2 aft,) 2 50 cal MGs on the con, and a depth charge rack. A radar was installed for night search and action.

Bougainville Navy Duty

After the conversion, the 70 became part of the "Bougainville Navy" and assumed her mission. Her first great battle against the Japanese occurred while she and PT 167 were escorting LCT 63 from Cape Torokina back to the Treasury Islands on 11/5/43.

Japanese planes searching for a U.S. carrier fleet decided the trio of ships was their target. In the dusk the planes attacked. A low flying Kate hit the PT's antenna. The plane went into the sea but her unexploded torpedo and its carriage fell and imbedded itself in the bow of the PT boat. The PTs kept firing and shot down another of the Kates. At the same time the 70 came under a 14 minute air attack. The Japs hit her with four torpedos and one strafing run. Most of the torpedos ran harmlessly under her shallow draft but one bounced into her engine room, without exploding, killing one man. Fearing the smoking torpedo would explode, the skipper ordered abandon ship. The PT pulled alongside and took off the crew. The PT skipper made the LCI crew stand in the after part of the boat to keep the bow up because of his own unexploded torpedo damage.

After time passed with no explosion, a small crew went back aboard the LCI(G) 70. The LCT 63 passed her a line and towed her back



This gaping hole (above) in the side of the LCI(G) 70 was the entry point of a Japanese torpedo that hit the ship but failed to explode.

to Cape Tokina. Meantime, back in Japan, Radio Tokyo declared their planes had attacked a carrier fleet and declared it the "First Air Battle of Bougainville." They claimed, "One large carrier blown up and sunk, one medium carrier set ablaze and later sunk." Third Amphib Commander Wilkerson sent the trio of ships a congratulatory radio message "Your fine shooting made them believe you were big stuff XGrand Job for all of you X."

After repairs the 70 resumed her duties with the Bougainville Navy as before. They prevented barges from bringing in Jap reinforcements and supplies, supported recon efforts, bombarded beaches, and escorted small craft. When the fleet ships departed for central Pacific action, their barge activities expanded to patrolling St. George Channel between New Ireland and New Britain. All LCI gunboat crews declared this to be the "scary" duty. From 2/25-17/44. The 70 along with LCI(G) 67, escorted the 12 troop-carrying LCIs involved in the Green Islanding which was, essentially, unopposed. In the late summer they moved into New Guinea to

become part of the Seventh Amphibious Force.

Recapturing the Philippines

The next action for the 70 was the Morotai Island landing. Morotai fighter plane landing strips were planned to cover the Mindanao Landing in the Philippines, which was cancelled while the attack group was at sea. The landing went on, regardless. It was unopposed and the airstrips proved useful for the upcoming Leyte Landings and as a staging areas for the recapture of the Dutch East Indies.

The Mindoro Landing on 12/15/44 was the next major landing for the 70. Although Kamikaze attacks were continuous the landing was a success. The Mindoro Landing was considered part of the upcoming Lingayen Gulf Landing as its air bases were needed to protect the sea approaches and the air over Luzon for that landing. It was as part of the Lingayen Gulf Attack Force that the 70 once again came seriously into harm's way.

On 1/3/45, as a part of the Admiral J.B. Oldendorf's bombardment group of over 164 ships, the 70 moved out through the Surigao Straits and into the Sulu Sea. For the next eight days, the entire bombardment group and the rest of the assault groups came under continuous Kamikaze attacks. The gunboat was one of the numerous victims. On 1/5/44, a Kamikaze plane hit 70, killing 5, wounding 6, and knocking 8 over the side. Regardless, the 70 continued her mission providing inshore fire support for the UDTs at Lingayen Gulf. Surprisingly, the beach was clear of obstacles and only one mine was discovered, and only one beach drew rifle and machinegun fire. During the various phases

of the landing the 70 was credited with shooting down 3 enemy planes.

After repairs and R&R at Hollandia, the 70 moved to Morotai for training with the 9th Australian Division for the Landing at Brunei Bay on 6/10/45 to begin the recapture of Borneo. In this landing UDTs were available to clear a path to the beach through obstacles, and the 70 gave them inshore protection enabling them to accomplish their mission. After this, the 55th landing by the 7th Amphibious Force, the 70 retired to Hollandia to await the invasion of Japan.

For her Bougainville and Lingayen Gulf actions the ship and her crew was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. Her citation stated: *“Operating in contact with the enemy under numerous attacks, the USS LCI(G) 70 performed her varied duties in a courageous and efficient manner...Her courageous determination and effort were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.”*

Note: Information about the LCI(G) 70 for this account was supplied by crew members Bill Randall and Gilbert V. Ortiz. Both of whom are deceased; Randall in 2011 and Ortiz, this year. And John Reulet passed this year. Two members of the 70 going strong are Royal Wetzel, Leo Wilcox.....

***This article**, written by LeRoy Olson in 2005, was included in a treasure trove I inherited from Jim McCarthy, Board Director and California State Director. Jim and LeRoy combined their talents and efforts to produce the priceless USS LCI Calendars from 2002 through 2007. J. Flynn*



No, that is not the Greek God Poseidon, it is Carl Chapple, LCI sailor in the YMCA pool for a shakedown cruise for one of his LCI models. Carl's caption on the back of the photo is, "I make sure they can float."

Carl was a shipmate of Roland Ellingson, on the LCI 1033 and this photo was in the Ellingson family collection. We all loved Carl's LCI models and for years he would donate a model as a raffle prize at LCI reunions. They were great fundraisers; one drawing I recall raised \$450 for the Assn.

And I owe a debt of gratitude to Carl as well. When I crashed the LCI reunion in Reno, NV in 2001 Carl was there with four of his scale models. He talked me through the different configurations of LCI's inside and out. His models allowed the decks of the ship to be removed separately. In those models, you could see the crew's quarters, the troop holds, the ammo storage areas and the engine room. It was a great introduction to LCI's.

During the 1995 LCI Reunion in San Diego, another LCI sailor, Adolph Brusig gave Carl a tour of the city. In return, Carl gave Adolph a model of his LCI. Over the years, we would pick up Adolph and his LCI model on the way to our Pearl Harbor Day luncheons. The LCI sailors at the luncheons loved it, and it gave them a chance to show and tell their families all about LCI's.

Where there's Smoke, There's Fire!

By Ralph I. Miller, LCI(M) 805

In the Campaign in the Pacific, LCI's made a lot of smoke and provided a good cover for the "big boys," the destroyers, the cruisers, and the battleships in anchorages. Making smoke protected the others from the Kamikazes but the LCI's trailing the smoke were always outside that protective screen. And when the smoke generators caught on fire on a dark night, and they did frequently, the LCI became the brightly lit target for Kamikazes.

Ralph I. Miller of McKinleyville, CA, who served aboard the LCI 805 said, "When making smoke, we became very good firefighters. We wanted to put that fire out in a hurry," he said as he recalls his LCI service and particular the onslaughts of Kamikazes.

Ralph entered the Navy on Aug. 26, 1943, and after boot camp in San Diego went to Farragut, ID for Signal School. Then it was out to Camp Pendleton, CA making amphibious landings with Marines. The landings were day and night, and sometimes after a landing they spent time digging foxholes and sleeping in them. Odd duty for a sailor.

After liberty, and a trip to the Altar he was sent to Treasure Island for a day then to Hawaii. Sailing under the Golden Gate Bridge with people waving, Ralph wondered, "will I ever see it again?" In Hawaii, he was mustered aboard the LCI(M)805 headed for the Philippines where the ship saw action and earned a Battle Star. Okinawa was next where they shelled beaches and helped the Army destroy 200 enemy suicide boats. Later, during night patrol in a cove, the 805 and the

806 exploded 23 magnetic mines. Then on April 6, 1945 Japan sent 700 suicide planes on the fleet. The first wave was 350 planes that came crashing in on our ships. After that they came 45 – 50 at a time. That lasted for four hours and during that time we lost hundreds, or thousands of sailors. When the planes hit a ship, the whole topside was engulfed in flames of high octane gas and bombs.

The following day the Kamikazes came continually all day and the days after until the War ended. In those five months, we lost in excess of 200 ships and 7,000 sailors, some of whom were pulled from their gun mounts burned to a crisp. During that time Japan sent 4,528 suicide planes.

One sunny day I went topside to get some fresh air. General Quarters were sounded and I was at my battle station looking at an enemy plane coming right at me, with his canopy open. He crashed in into the sea just short of our ship, was thrown out of his plane and landing almost on our ship. If that plane had hit our ship, I would not be here telling you about it.

One afternoon a destroyer came into our harbor dropping depth charges looking for submarines. The next day I went topside next to the conning tower when I saw a splash astern. I thought, "We must have another sub in here." Then I looked up and saw a Jap bomber that had dropped five bombs. None of them hit us but I decided I did not want to be topside. As I was headed down, General Quarters were sounded and all the crew was coming up. One sailor grabbed me and said, "Where are you going?" Did we ever get scared? You bet we did. Then on April 17 we supported the landing on I.E. Shima. One day as we were trying to get fuel, water and

food, the Capt. said, "Miller, call that ship to see if we can come alongside for logistics." I decided to send it by semaphore from the highest part of the ship. As I started to send the message I saw six Japanese planes coming at us. In Signal school we were instructed, "When you are told to send a message, no matter what happens, continue to send that message." Thankfully, the Captain looked up and saw me and said "Get the 'H' down here." That was the fastest I ever obeyed an order."

Before the War ended, we received orders for Leyte, Philippines for repairs and preparation for the invasion of Japan on Nov. 5. We had seen enough of it and wanted no part of it. Thank you, President Harry Truman, for dropping the A-Bombs.

With War over our new destination was China after a stop in Okinawa. But three days out we ran into a three-day typhoon with 90-foot-high waves. The last night I received a message by flashing light to "break convoy and weather the storm as best you can." Due to the giant waves, we kept going out of sight from each other so it took three hours to receive the message and send it to other ships. The next day we were off course by 400 miles.

We finally made it to Okinawa and then Sintao, China, and finally to Manchuria. Three days later the Communists said they could no longer guarantee our protection. Our welcome worn out, we returned to Sintao. Early morning, Dec. 3, 1945, my name was called, "Hey Miller. Get your sea bag, you're going home. First San Diego, then on to San Francisco, Dec. 21, 1945 for he and his wife Jo Evelyn's first anniversary. A happy ending.



Ralph and Jo Evelyn Miller on their 70th Anniversary celebration on January. 2015.

Baby Ruth War Time Ad

MANNED WITH ENERGY

An LCI (Landing Craft, Infantry) storms the enemy! One of our dauntless invasion craft, the seagoing LCI is heavily armed...equipped with powerful engines pulsing with ENERGY. Fearlessly delivers troops under battle conditions.

Baby Ruth HELPS IN ENERGY-REPLACEMENT

Our body needs replacements, too . . . it runs on food, as ship engines run on fuel. Highly nutritious food, such as Baby Ruth, answers the "call for replacements" quickly . . . for Baby Ruth Candy is rich in dextrose, used directly for body energy.

CURTISS CANDY COMPANY - CHICAGO 13, ILLINOIS
Producers of Fine Foods

Great! Cookies Made with Baby Ruth!
RECIPE ON EVERY WRAPPER

BUY U.S. WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

If you cannot find Baby Ruth on the candy counter, remember Uncle Sam's needs come first with us as with you

Baby Ruth
CURTISS CANDY
RICH IN DEXTROSE

THE "ANGELS" CAME AT DAWN

On February 23, 1945, the Marines raised the flag on Mt. Suribachi, on the island of Iwo Jima. On that same morning, about 25 miles south of Manila in the Philippine Islands, the 11th Airborne Division began an operation about which Army Chief of Staff General Colin Powell proclaimed, in 1993, "I doubt that any airborne unit in the world will ever be able to rival the Los Banos prison raid. It is the textbook airborne operation for all ages and all armies".

As that day dawned at Los Banos Civilian Internment Camp, it held two thousand one hundred and forty-two U.S., British, Canadian, French and other Allied civilian prisoners of the Imperial Japanese Army. After several years of imprisonment, they were the remaining survivors, who were slowly but surely going to join their predecessors in starving to death. Among the remaining survivors were my father, mother, younger brother and I.

We were down to one official meal a day; living on a bug filled rice mush (mostly water) called lugau, banana tree stalks, papaya tree roots, weeds, slugs and in some cases dogs and cats.

On November 19, 1945, my father, who was almost six feet tall, weighed 106 pounds; my mother, as she later recalled said, "I stopped weighing myself when I weighed 80 pounds", weighed 92 pounds on that date; my ten-year-old younger brother weighed fifty pounds; and I myself, at twelve years of age weighed fifty-seven pounds.

As we went to bed the night before, little did we know as we slept, that the men of the Reconnaissance Platoon of the 511th Parachute Infantry Regiment, with attached guerrillas, were sneaking up to their positions at key points outside the camp. Elsewhere, the

troopers of the 188th Para Glider Regiment were busy keeping the Japanese troops occupied in a diversionary operation. The men of the 672nd Amphibian Tractor Battalion were making their way in the dark with hand held compasses across Lake Laguna de Bay, transporting the balance of the First Battalion of the 511th Regiment, and that "B" Company 511th with attached Medics and the light machine gun platoon from Headquarters Company First Battalion was getting a little bit of sleep at Nichols Field under the wings of the 65th Troop Carrier Squadron's C-47s that were to carry them to their moment of history.

That morning, as I walked out of the barracks with my family to line up for 7:00 AM roll call, I looked up into the sky over a field near our camp and saw several C-47 transport planes.

Suddenly, the sky filled with the "Angels", the troopers of "B" Company 511th, floating down as if from heaven in their white parachutes.

At that same moment, the men of the Recon Platoon hit the guard posts and began their race to the guardroom where the off-duty guards had their rifles stored. Those guards were outside doing their regular 7:00 AM morning exercises. By the way, the troopers won the race.

We all ran back into the barracks. With bullets flying just over my head through the grass mat walls, I lay on the floor under my bunk, eating my breakfast. I was so hungry that not even bullets could keep me from that pitifully meager portion of watery, buggy, rice mush.

Soon, one of the "Angels" came into our barracks shouting, "Grab only what you can carry and hurry outside to the Amtracs", those Amphibian Tractors that had brought the balance of the attacking 1st Battalion across Lake Laguna de Bay.

They had to get us back safely across the lake to U.S. lines before two thousand crack

Japanese troops of the infamous Tiger Division, just over the hill, found out what was going on.

On that day, all 2,142 of us, including a newly born baby who was carried out in a helmet liner, were saved. ALL OF US WERE RESCUED!!! NOT ONE OF US WAS LOST!!!

Sometime later, I read that they had come to get us because General Douglas MacArthur had received information, from three men who had escaped from our camp, that our guards had been making preparations to dispose of us -- digging trenches for our graves and placing oil barrels which could be rolled down the hillside onto the barracks to set them afire -- then machine gunning any of us who ran outside.

I also read that this execution had been scheduled for that very morning of February 23, 1945.

To this day, almost seventy-two years later, this singular event of history, this magnificent military operation, this unmatched rescue of starving civilian prisoners of war from behind enemy lines has been overshadowed by the Mount Suribachi flag raising.

They were and are a special breed, those men who came that day. Superbly trained -- thank God -- men who went home after they served -- going on with their lives -- not complaining -- humble -- proud that they served.

When I have met one of my "Angels" for the first time, I have taken his hand and said, "Thank you for my life". To a man, they have immediately insisted, "I was just doing my job. You guys were the heroes".

But for the pilots and crews of the 65th Troop Carrier Squadron, the Paratroopers of the 11th

Airborne and the men of the 672nd Amphibian Tractor Battalion, I would not have survived Los Banos Internment Camp. There would have been no opportunity for me to have a wife, son, daughter, nine wonderful grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

What remained of my bullet-riddled body would be lying at the bottom of a trench at what is now the Agricultural College of the University of the Philippines, in the town of Los Banos, The Philippines. The Wheeler Family -- as it exists today -- would never have been.

I WILL NEVER FORGET!

Robert A. Wheeler, Los Banos Internee



Bob Wheeler served in the USN as a Radioman 2nd Class on the USS Avocet -- MHC -16, which was an AMCU and before that it was USS LCI 653. A few months ago, Bob Wheeler, visited the LCI 713 in Portland and this is his story.

What's in a Name?

The USS Begor (APD 127) slid down the ways of deFoe Shipyards of Saginaw Michigan, May 25 1944. It was being built as a fast, shallow draft ship capable of delivering and supporting Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) personnel close to shore as part of the pre-invasion techniques that the US Navy Amphibious Forces had developed during the island warfare in the Pacific. It displaced 2,130 tons, was 306'0" in length, with a beam of 37'0" and carried a crew of 204 men to support 162 troops. Armament consisted of one 5-inch gun turret and six 40mm's

The ship was bearing the name to honor Lt(jg) Fay Broughton Begor who had died in the South Pacific as a result combat wounds received the previous September during the landing operations at Lae, New Guinea. That is where his story ended. Fay Broughton Begor was born in 1916 and lived in the small town of Moriah, Essex County, New York. This town is in the Finger Lake region and is closer to Montreal Canada, than New York City. After college Fay entered the Medical School at McGill University in Montreal. There he obtained his MD in May of 1941 and completed his internship by August of 1942. During his studies at McGill he met and married Katherine Savage in 1940. They had a daughter Anne Charlotte, born November 23 1941 two weeks before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. As were most young men of his time he was swept up in the tide of war. He applied for a commission in the US Navy and was appointed LT(jg) on July 22 1942. He was assigned to the New York Navy Yard as an assistant surgeon.

His requests for sea duty resulted in his assignment to the Amphibious Forces at Norfolk VA in October 1942 where training was being conducted with the US Army. In

his request for sea duty he wrote, "I would like to see some action" and to "use some of my professional knowledge." His request was granted on April 1943 and he was assigned as Group Medical Officer for the Landing Craft Infantry Flotilla 7. He reported aboard the USS LCI(L) 339 on July 8 1943. Flotilla 7 had just completed successful landing operations the previous week at Kiriwina Island and Woodlark Island. These landings were intended to protect the flanks and provide air strips for coverage as part of General McArthur's new strategy; "Hit them where they aint."

The first hop was Operation Postern, to eliminate the Japanese garrison at Lae on the coast of New Guinea. D-Day was September 4, 1943. Landing Craft Infantry Flotilla 7, composed of Group 19, LCI(L) 28(flotilla flagship) 25, 27, 29, 30, 226, 339, 344, and 71, and Group 20; LCI(L)'s 31, 34, 73, 338, 340, 341, 342, and 343. Flotilla 7 was assigned to land soldiers of the Australian Army 9th Division on the Huon Peninsula, east of the town. At 0705 LCI(L) 339, in the wave comprised of four LCI's of the group, was about 150 yards from the beach after letting go of the stern anchor when they were attacked from the port side by Japanese aircraft. The bombing attack was preceded by Mitsubishi A6M (Zeros) strafing the decks of the LCI's "riddling them with holes from bow to stern" and causing multiple casualties. The Zeros were soon followed by Mitsubishi G4M (Betty) and Aichi D3A (Val) bombers

At the time of the attack, the well deck was crowded with the Australians who were prepared to land. LT(jg) Begor went on deck immediately after the ship had been strafed to treat the many wounded. As he was giving aid the bombers arrived and released a load from around 1500 ft. The LCI(L) 339 was

bracketed by the 200lb bombs; one starboard, one port, and a direct hit forward of the pilot house. The bombs caused additional casualties among Australians and the ship's crew and the LCI(L) 339 began to list as water flooded troop compartments 1, 2 and 3.



LCI 339 after Japanese aerial attack

Lt(jg) Begor who wanted to see action and put his medical skills to the test, found himself right in the middle of the war. He was severely wounded in both thighs by the explosion of the bomb, but continued to treat the large number of casualties aboard. In the meantime, the captain of the LCI(L) 339 continued his approach to the beach and successfully landed the remaining troops and secured additional medical aid. The Flotilla 7

Commander H. McGee in LCI(L)28 gave permission to abandon the ship on the beach. Lt(jg) Begor was transferred to LCI(L) 338 for transport to the Army Field Hospital at Buna. He was subsequently transferred to the USS LST 464 which was converted to a hospital ship. There he died on September 9 1943. Eight of the crew were wounded in the attack were treated and released to new ships.

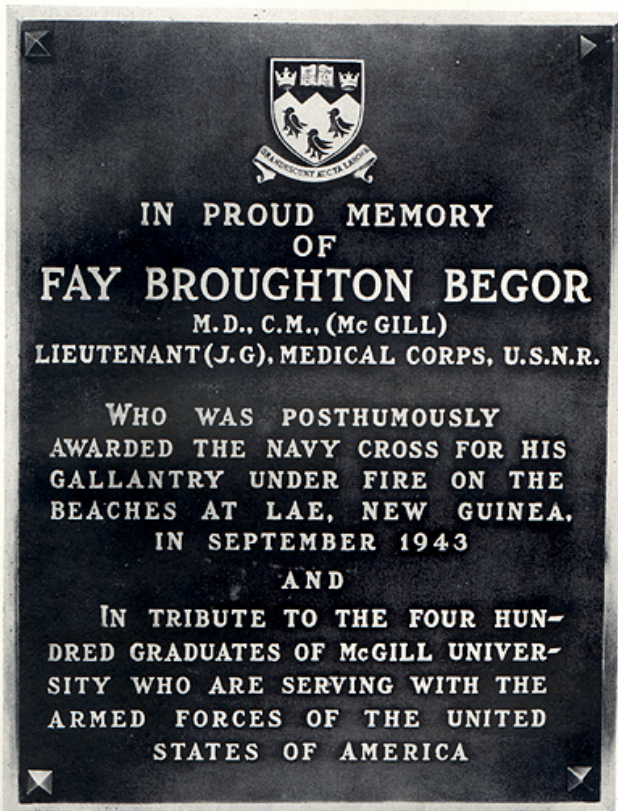
Lt(jg) Fay Begor was honored by the US Navy for his dedication to duty by awarding him the Navy Cross.

His citation reads:

The President of the United States of America takes pride in presenting the Navy Cross (Posthumously) to Lieutenant, Junior Grade, (MC)Fay Broughton Begor (NSN: 0-182912), United States Naval Reserve, for distinguished service in the line of his profession, extraordinary courage, and disregard of personal danger while serving as Medical Officer on board the Infantry Landing Craft U.S.S. LCI(L), THREE HUNDRED THIRTY-NINE (LCI(L)-339), that beached in the vicinity of Japanese occupied Lae, New Guinea, on 4 September 1943

Though his ship was attacked repeatedly by enemy aircraft, Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Begor courageously continued to care for the wounded in the face of enemy bombing and strafing attacks, with total disregard for his personal safety, until he was fatally wounded. Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Begor's professional ability, courage, and inspiring devotion to duty upheld the highest traditions of the Medical Corps and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

General Orders: Commander 7th Fleet:
Serial 7611 (November 26, 1943)



PLAQUE PRESENTED BY MCGILL UNIVERSITY TO THE U.S.S. Begor, 1945

One hundred and eighty-one days later, the USS Begor, the first ship to carry the name of a crewman of a Landing Craft Infantry, continued the fight against the Empire of Japan, and achieve final victory in WWII.



USS Begor (APD 127)

Two Ocean War, by. Samuel Morrison

Hello Shipmates....Perhaps some of you are acquainted with Samuel Morison. He was commissioned by F. Roosevelt to record the Navy history of WWII and he did a pretty good job. I wanted to share a bit of writing of his from "The Two Ocean War"

"There is nothing in warfare to be compared with the hushed tension of the final approach in a night landing. Everything ahead is uncertain. There is no sound but the rush of waters, the throbbing of your ship's engines and of your own heart. You can see nothing but the ship ahead and the ship astern.

The shore, if dimly visible, is shrouded in darkness. A few mistakes on our part, or clever thrusts by the enemy, may utterly wreck a vast, long-planned effort. There can be no drawn battle, no half-success, in an amphibious landing; it is win all splendidly or lose all miserably."

Gordon Smith, LCI (L) 43

Restoration of the LSIL 1091

As part of the restoration of the LSIL 1091, the Museum acquired a **LCI Introduction Book**, which details all aspects of the ship along with operating instructions.

Not all parts of the ship, however, are treated equally but every bit of information is interesting and useful. Engineering rates one-half page, electrical gets one page, and the galley gets one-half page.

A really important item, though, the Coffee Pot, gets one and one-half pages! Makes sense! Have to have coffee.

After all, the ship runs on diesel fuel but the crew runs on coffee.

Joe Flynn, editor

The Wife's Watch

While her Sailor answered the call from the Sea, she stood on the shore fighting down the fear that he would not return.

In his absences, she has had to deal with car repairs, home maintenance, financial worries, children's injuries and illness.

All these and more she has taken in stride so that her Sailor could proudly serve our nation.

Today the Sideboys are posted and the Boatswain stands ready to pipe.

And as she has for so many years, a Sailor's wife stands waiting on the shore.

Soon the pipe will sound and her sailor will come ashore for the last time...his watch stands relieved ...so too does hers.

We gratefully honor her courage and steadfastness and offer our best to both of them for the new life they now begin.



The Watch

For twenty-two years this Sailor has stood the watch.

While some of us were in our bunks at night this Sailor stood the watch.

While some of us were in school learning our trade, this Shipmate stood the watch.

Yes, yes even before some of us were born into this world, this shipmate stood the watch.

In those years when the storm clouds of war were seen brewing on the horizon of history, this Shipmate stood the watch.

Many times, he would cast an eye ashore and see his family standing there needing his guidance and his help. Needing that hand to hold during hard times, but still he stood the watch.

He stood the watch for twenty-two years. He stood the watch so that we, our families and our fellow countrymen could sleep soundly in safety, each and every night, knowing that a Sailor stood watch.

Today we are here to say,

"Shipmate... the watch stands relieved.

Relieved by those you have trained, guided and lead.

Shipmate you stand relieved. We have the watch."

"Boatswain, standby to pipe the side, Shipmate's going ashore."

Sculpture: San Diego Bay, Embarcadero

Obscure Navy Jobs

When you are surrounded by a bunch of “Old Salts” and the conversations turn to Navy rates, the finer points of left arm and right arm rates usually come first. Then it goes back to some of the rates from the good old days that have now been discontinued. Time and the modern Navy eliminated a number of them but some took longer to be phased out than you might suspect.

Take the job of **Pidgeon Trainer**, who fed and cared for flocks of birds used to deliver messages. Even with the development of radio and other means of communication, Pidgeon Trainers were in the Navy until 1961.

In the more efficient Navy the job of **Coal Heaver** was consigned to the dust bin of history. The job consisted of hauling coal from the ship’s bunker to the boiler furnaces in buckets weighing about 140 pounds. It was hot, dirty and dangerous work but members of the “black gang” received much higher pay than other sailors.

Jack of the Dust name may be history but the job remains. This rate was the cook’s helper, often covered with flour from working in the bread room. Rate established in 1876 was called the storeroom keeper.

Powder Monkey carried gunpowder from storage magazine to crews manning the cannons. Regulations in the 19th Century had a minimum age of 13 but boys as young as 6 were documented as serving in the Civil War.

Ship Cooper made and repaired barrels, casks and buckets. On the 713 these would be the men who built the new stoves for the galley, so we all know the importance of this job.

Source: *Midway Currents Magazine*, Spring 2015

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Got an Unusual Call – Unusual Error

The phone rang; I answered it. Is this Joe Flynn? It is. Well this is Byron Drew. The name sounded familiar, then I remembered; it was a name I had listed on the *In-Memoriam* page last issue of the *Elsie Item*! Oh oh.

I bit my tongue because my first question would have been, “Where are you calling from?” But Byron bailed me out. He said “You got ahead of me, Joe, I am alive and well.” I said, “That’s a relief, I am so sorry for the mix-up.”

We finally figured it out. Byron and his wife are downsizing and gave his *Elsie Item* back copies to his son to review and pass on. The son then donated them to a local library. A heads-up library volunteer called and said, these *Elsie Items* had been donated from an *estate* and asked if I wanted them. I said, “Yes, Box ’em up and send them to me, and I’ll pay the freight.” And he did.

So, this is one mistake that made me very happy. And Byron got a laugh out of it too. That LCI sense of humor goes a long way.

Appeal for LCI WWII Artifacts

In the last issue, we requested LCI artifacts and said the LSIL1091 Museum was in the process of securing their non-profit 501(c) 3 status. Ralph Davis, of the 1091 called and said, the paperwork has been completed. So now if you wish to donate an artifact (that has been appraised) or cash, you can take a tax credit for the donations. Send the artifact or cash donation to:

LSIL 1091 Museum

Attn: Ralph Davis

901 Birch Ave.

McKinleyville, CA 95519

HOW TO RESTORE A LCI

By Rich Lovell, AFMM and LCI Assn.

Countless hours have been spent in the restoration of LCI 713. How did this all begin and what innovations had to be created to make the 713 what it is today?

After WWII, the ship was used to move log rafts, store fuel, and had a 25 year period of being partially submerged and used as a fishing platform. Then she was rescued and the long restoration process began.

Different owners and ideas were formulated and now the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum with an all-volunteer force and Board of Directors is in charge.

The Greatest Generation operated these ships on a skeleton crew with limited resources—much like the modern day volunteers. We are fortunate to have better research devices and many times “Do the impossible—It just takes longer”.

The process starts with volunteers. Gordon Smith and Rick Holmes have supplied the creative juice to work miracles with large groups to enable the ship to survive. (Plate steel relocation; work with up to 25 different entities to procure berthing, host reunions). Dave & Mary McKay have many hours in travel and capturing images (tens of thousands) of photos, documents and history to tell the story of the “waterbug Navy”. Jerry Gilmartin has delved deep into history to re-tell not only the story of the ship, but also restore items to WWII appearance. Mark Stevens and Rich Lovell have scrounged pieces and parts to rebuild the ship.

About 950 ships of many configurations were made in 10 shipyards during the war.

Selecting the right drawings, photos, and reports involves a lot of coordination of the display committee. Microfilm copies are fuzzy or incomplete with measurements. Photos give an idea of different configurations. Reports tell the story of mistakes in design, and resolutions to make

the ship able to perform its mission. After modern “scale” drawings are created and measurements are re-checked the decision process begins. Can it be fabricated in-house? Is it necessary to fabricate outside—what are the estimates? Is it cost effective, and is it a priority? Present it to the Board of Directors at the monthly meeting for discussion and approval/more work or disapproval. If approved, coordinate with the vendor as a non-profit. Ensure the item can be moved to the ship, and navigated through the narrow areas to its destination (range hood, trough toilets, trough urinal).

The non-profit organization has had many donated items and special contributions over the years to keep it in budget. After the item is on board, the job is not done until it is securely mounted (water tank, coffee urn, day tank, table tops, clipping table). After all this, paint to match the photographs for accuracy (galley stoves and exhaust). Details are important to tell the story (stenciling each compartment, running wiring in organized fashion, adding visual displays to give visitors a better picture of what life would have been like for a small crew in a tight place).

Every Saturday and more, volunteers come from Stevenson, WA and Salem, OR plus Vancouver and Clackamas to perform a ‘labor of love’ each time. This may be as simple as giving tours to families whose loved one served or WWII veterans. Chow is served and shared with visitors as well as crew. The story is re-told on Facebook, the Deck Log, and the ELSIE ITEM. The goal for the volunteers is to keep the heritage of the Greatest Generation alive. We need your help to continue this legacy.



Redesigned, Revised and Expanded Website
Now Available!!
<http://www.usslci.org>

Dear LCI Veterans and Associates:

The Officers and Executive Board of the USS LCI National Association are fully committed to honoring and preserving the legacy of the sailors that manned the Landing Craft Infantry (LCI) ships during World War II. During the past year, we have worked diligently to redesign, revise, and expand the content of the LCI website to ensure that the history, bravery and sacrifices made by these “Greatest Generation” sailors is preserved for future generations to appreciate.

With the launch of the organization’s revised website ***<http://www.usslci.org>***, we hope that you agree that we have accomplished this goal. Although the website is ***not*** intended to replace the Elsie Item Newsletter, it will serve as the primary repository for all LCI related information even when the publication of the Elsie Item is no longer practical or feasible. ***The website will be dynamic -- with new material added frequently to provide all visitors fresh articles and information to enjoy.*** Visitors will also have the opportunity to comment on the many articles that are posted to the site.

The most useful and unique feature of the site is the addition of the “**Search**” capability for locating specific information about shipmates, ships or stories contained in the Elsie Items or that is located elsewhere on the site. You will appreciate this feature as you explore the ***Archives*** section where the almost 100 Elsie Items published during the past 26 years are located.

From the site’s ***Home Page*** read the ***Featured Stories***; recall key events and LCI landings from ***This Day in History***; or view or connect to the ***LCI Facebook*** page. Refresh your memory by exploring ***The LCI Experience*** where LCI facts, stories, reunions and videos of LCIs in action and much more are found. For individuals trying to locate or gather information on a LCI shipmate or a particular LCI there is also a ***Frequently Asked Questions*** page to assist them. Learn more of your organization and our mission in the new ***About*** section or review the ***Story Guide*** to assist those wanting to write their own story.

There is so much more to discover on the site. Take your time, enjoy a beverage of your choice and explore!! *Sincerely, Stan Galik*

Special thanks to LCI Board member Stan Galik and his son Mark for creating the new and improved USS LCI Website, a rare gift of time and talent.

Financial Report of the USS LCI National Association Inc

We are publishing the results of the USS LCI National Association Financial Operations for the years ending May 30, 2017 and 2016. During these years, the expenses of the LCI Association to publish the Elsie Item Magazine, maintain the USSLCI.Org website and the the expenses for administration averaged \$306 per month during the current year and \$2,304 per month in the prior year. The LCI Association Executive Board has been able to make cost reductions in these areas because of the termination of the services of Nehemiah Communications in South Carolina and the increased efforts on your behalf by your association officers who have perform most of those services as volunteers.

As expected there has been a natural decline in the number of WWII veteran members. This has led to a related decrease in receipts of dues for the paid subscriptions for the ELSIE ITEM. Fortunately, continued Cash Donations and the purchase of LCI Branded Products by our members, has allowed the LCI Association to become financially viable over the last year. Thank you to all for your Generous Support!

Robert E Wright Jr., Treasurer

USS LCI National Association Inc Statement of Financial Position

	Current Year May 31, 2017	Prior Year May 31, 2016
ASSETS		
Cash and Checking	24,735.94	8,878.28
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>24,735.94</u>	<u>8,878.28</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Total Liabilities	15.00	0.00
Equity		
Opening Equity Balance 06/01/2006	90,564.45	90,564.45
Reduction of Net Assets 2007 to 2016	-81,686.17	-75,742.01
Current Addition to Net Assets	15,842.66	-5,944.16
Total Equity	<u>24,720.94</u>	<u>8,878.28</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>24,735.94</u>	<u>8,878.28</u>

USS LCI National Association Inc Statement of Activities

	Jun 1 2016 - May 31 2017	Jun 1 2015 - May 31 2016
Support, Gains and Revenue		
Direct Public Support	6,696.07	8,603.16
Membership Dues	12,245.00	12,410.00
Net Product Revenue	1,050.44	1,302.88
Other Types of Revenue	552.10	-262.03
Total Support, Gains and Revenue	<u>20,543.61</u>	<u>22,054.01</u>
Expenditures		
Organization Operating Expenditures	1,085.43	1,898.82
Elsie Publication	2,585.52	9,342.23
Website Operations	0.00	5,407.12
Operations - Nehemiah Communications	0.00	11,000.00
Total Organization Operating Expenditures	<u>3,670.95</u>	<u>25,749.35</u>
Contributions to Other Organizations	1,030.00	350.00
Total Expenditures	<u>4,700.95</u>	<u>26,099.35</u>
Total Addition to Net Assets	<u>15,842.66</u>	<u>-5,944.16</u>

USS LCI National Association Annual Membership Application

☐ **Renewal Application**

☐ **New Application**

Please Indicate Your Relationship to a LCI or a LCI Veteran

☐ **LCI Veteran (Self)**

☐ **LCI Veteran's Family Member**

☐ **Armed Forces Veteran/Active Duty**

☐ **Other** _____

Name _____ Your Final Rank or Rating _____

U.S.S. LCI () _____ Birth date _____

IF Other Armed Forces Branch _____ ***Final Rank or Rating*** _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____ Email _____ @ _____

For LCI Veterans; a Relative who we could contact if we are unable to contact you directly

Name _____ Phone () _____

Membership Dues (Includes the ELSIE ITEM Magazine)

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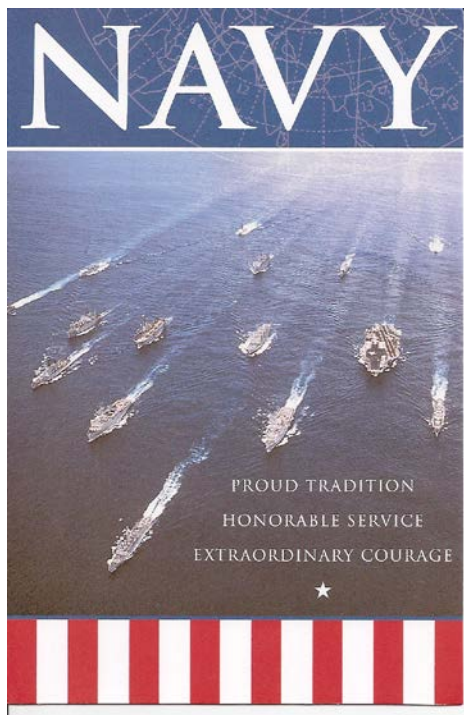
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Attention LCI Veterans and Associates

We need your stories now. Write or email Joe Flynn (See Contact Information Above).



ATTENTION ON DECK!

There will be a November 11 Veteran's Day formation on the fantail to render a snappy, salute to all USS LCI Veterans.

You received this honor and recognition the old-fashioned way,

You Earned it!

**So, for all you Elsie Item
Sailors out there;**

*Fair Winds and
Following seas*

**The USS LCI
National Association**

