



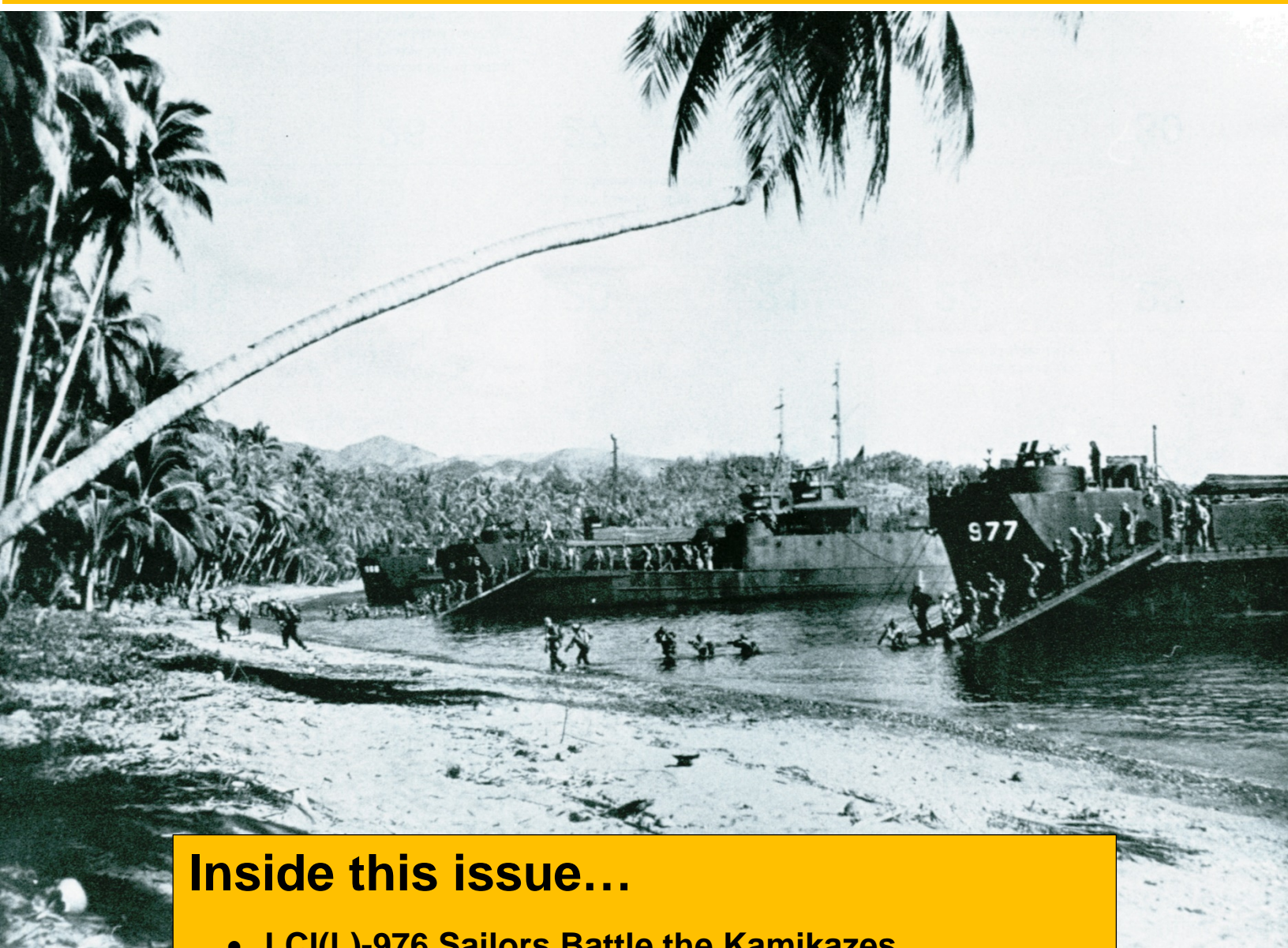
Elsie Item

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

• Established May 14-18, 1991, Norfolk, VA •

ISSUE 100

MARCH 2018



Inside this issue...

- LCI(L)-976 Sailors Battle the Kamikazes
- May 4-6 Reunion Announcement & Details
- Memorial Listing of LCI Sailors KIA during WWII

“The Elsie Item”

Number 100 March 2018

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, to any past or current member of the U.S. Armed Forces, and to anyone interested in the history of LCIs.

Any material for possible publication should be sent to Jeff Veesenmeyer, Editor by email (JeffreyMktg@gmail.com), or snail mail to the address listed below 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. Perhaps they could do a paper or video recording on your wartime experiences. Whatever it takes, send it in. You can even call us. We need your history. Your family wants your history too.

Stories/ Letters

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Cover Photo: LCI(L)s (L-R) 966, 976, 977 landing Americal Division at Dumagnet Negros Island, Philippines 26 April 1945. See stories from two 976 sailors page 20.

Visit our Website: www.usslci.org for additional information to the USS LCI National Association. You’ll also find all past issues of the “Elsie Item” for your reading enjoyment.

For information related to the LCI(L) 713 visit: www.amphibiousforces.org

Visit our Facebook pages for photos and updates...

- For LCI National Assoc. visit: <https://www.facebook.com/USSLCIAssn/>
- For LSIL 1091 visit: <https://www.facebook.com/USSLIL1091/>
- For AFFM visit: <https://www.facebook.com/LCI713/>

“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

**Centennial Edition
March 2018**



Welcome to our 100th Edition of the Elsie Item! It is the work of our new editor, Jeff Veessenmeyer. Welcome Jeff!

Jeff hails from Cambridge, Wisconsin. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Photo-Journalism and an Associate of Applied Science degree in Journalism. He is the Author of “Kamikaze Destroyer”, 2014 and “Kamikaze Terror”, 2017. He is experienced in Marketing and Advertising.

Jeff is a Navy Veteran. He attained the rank of E5 in Naval Air Reserve-Photo Air Intelligence. He is a member of the Tin Can Sailors, LSM-LSMR Association, and the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce. He is a volunteer with the Oakland Conservation Club. He is a member of the Friends of Cambridge Library and he is a Director for Cambridge Historic School Museum. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing, hunting and golf.

Jeff was introduced to us by our Secretary, Pete Selan. Those who are going to the reunion in Portland will be able to meet him. Jeff and his wife Joy are taking a long train ride from Wisconsin. Please feel free to contact Jeff at jeffreymktg@gmail.com.

John France, President, USS LCI National Association

P.S. Be sure to check out our 2018 Reunion Announcement on pages 17, 18 and 19. We gather in Portland May 4-6. Deadline for registration and payment is April 15th.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

NO DISAPPOINTMENT

(hymn 1914) by Frederick M Lehman

NASB John 14:1-6, John 10:9, John 2:19,
John 1:1-3, John 3:16, Rev 21: 10-27, 22:1-6

When I was a youngster, until 17 years of age, our family attended a small Evangelical Church, where we sang a hymn titled "There's No Disappointment In Heaven". You may have never heard it before. I'd attempt to give the words as I remember them. (But give me a break-I am 92 ½ years old) so for a more accurate version of this hymn visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7Tyx82AOSQ>.

I do recall the Refrain...

*I'm bound for that beautiful city,
My Lord has prepared for His own;
Where all the redeemed of all ages
Sing "Glory!" around the white throne;
Sometimes I grow homesick for Heaven,
And the glories I there shall behold;
What a joy that will be when my Savior I see,
In that beautiful city of gold.*

It seems that one would have to have a vivid imagination to pen such beautiful thoughts. In my view, the composer was inspired from his knowledge of God's work (the Bible). He speaks of Heaven as a real place, not a fictitious or imaginary storybook place. He is awed as he reads "The Book of books." In it we find Jesus telling His disciples that he would soon be leaving them (via his crucifixion, burial, resurrection and ascension).

In John 10:9 Jesus said, "I am the door, by me if anyone enter in, he shall be saved." Is there a heaven? Who better to tell us than

the one who came from there, returned, and promised to come again. We can believe him. Remember his words before he was crucified in John 2:19 "Destroy this temple (His body) and in three days raise it again." He arose the third day and before He went back to heaven He was seen, and it is recorded by his disciples and more than 500 others at one time. So can we believe one who is the truth personified? Yes! Heaven is a real place where all can go who will go the way God provided—through Jesus.

When I get to heaven, there will be a grand reunion. My parents and eleven of my siblings are already there. We'll be together in Heaven, not because we are better than others, but because we accepted God's invitation to come through his son Jesus who is the door; for "Whoever believes in Him." I hope to see my lifelong friend Henry Lefko, killed on Omaha beach and my Eagle Scout friend Joe Gilheany, lost in a submarine in the Pacific Ocean.

We can rely on the Creator of Heaven and Earth. John 1:1-3. There is a place called Heaven where there is eternal joy for all who respond to God's invitation. "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16. The City of gold referred to in the hymn, The Beautiful Unimaginable City is described in the book of Revelation 21: 10-27, 22:1-6.

Ebenezer (I Samuel 7:12)

RM-1/C Abe Laurenzo LCI 47, 409



In Memoriam

LCI 40
Richard Hall

LCI 80
Henry "Hank" Riegel

LCI 93
John Roberts

LCI 188
William "Red" Kurtz

LCI 213
Grover Lee Hays

LCI 334
Charles J. Chatterton

LCI 340
William Neumyer

LCI 342
William R. Doran

LCI 346
Milburn Shafer

LCI 393
E. Booker Bagby, Jr.

LCI 425
Samuel Formal

LCI 466
Lou W. Bales

LCI 523
Edward "Mike" Wooley

LCI 696
Rance Pless

LCI 707
Charles H. Walker

LCI 765
Arno "Hank" Henderson

LCI 777
Louis Polzin

LCI 944, 1053
Harry K. Erwin

LCI 1062
Homer McClintock

LCI 1094
James Connon

LCI (?)
Levy Rae Broady

LCI (?)
Leonard Colburn

LCI (?)
Lamar Moore Jr.



Gator Gossip

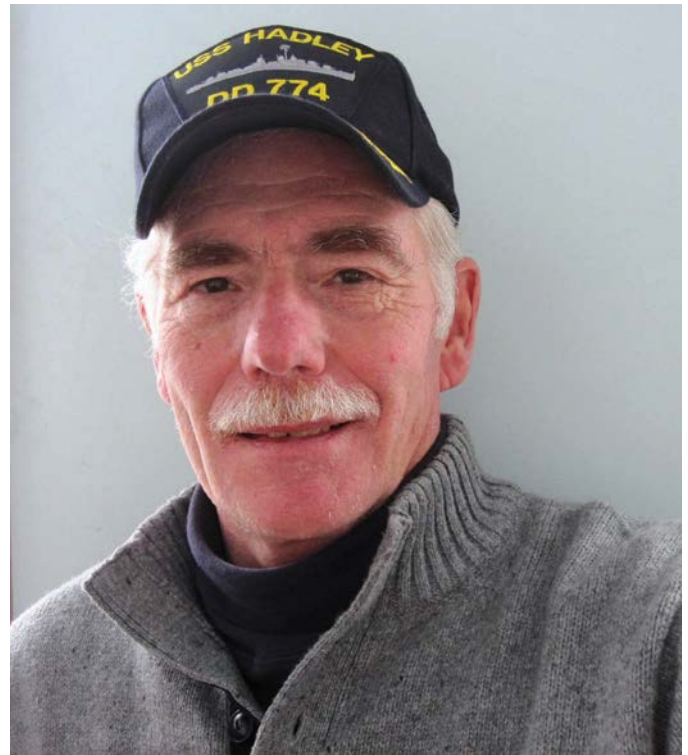
by Jeff Veesenmeyer

Except for driving a taxi cab during a six-month period of unemployment, my entire career involved the newspaper, magazine and publishing industries. I still subscribe to and read – printed editions – of several newspapers and magazines. My bookshelves overflow with reading material. The number one appeal to a printed book or publication is that you can read it anywhere...even in the head.

That's why taking the helm as editor of *Elsie Item* was an opportunity I couldn't pass up. I love the look, the feel and even the smell of printed materials. It's important to keep print publications alive for a generation of sailors who may not even own a computer.

Our digital library of *Elsie Item* www.usslci.org/archives is a wonderful way to archive the past issues. They are available to new members and can be referenced by anyone. But keeping the current issue available *only* in print, increases the value of membership. It also insures the continued longevity of this print publication.

My favorite section of any newspaper or magazine is the Letters to the Editor. I'm going to open this column up for your letters, comments and scuttlebutt. If you have a comment about an *Elsie Item* article, a short Navy story or a humorous memory, give me a call, an email or mail me a note.



Jeff Veesenmeyer is an author, and a veteran of the Naval Air Reserves. His family members served on destroyers, amphibs, an auxiliary, and the Iowa during WWII.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Jeff: Welcome aboard. You are taking a tough job and I want to wish you the very best.

Rod Scurlock

Hello, Jeff

Good to hear from you. Rick Holmes, our President, will see to it that you are added to the mailing list for Reunion information. We will look forward to seeing you this next May!

Gordon
QM 1/C
LCI #43

Looking forward to hearing from you too.

608-692-2121 JeffreyMktg@Gmail.com

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Gator newsletters found in dad's navy memorabilia

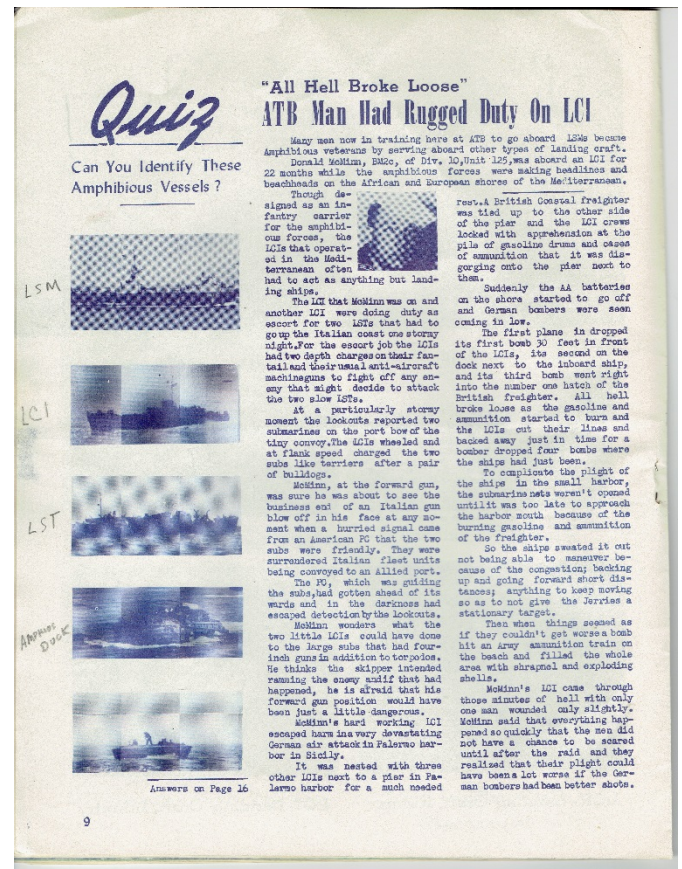
By Jeff Veesenmeyer – Elsie Item editor

Yes, you have a new Elsie Item editor. I'll be the guy who edits your submissions, lays out the pages for printing and provides some of the written articles.

I'm going to cheat a little for my first article. I found a box in my mom's attic with my dad's navy memorabilia. Robert Veesenmeyer served on the *LSM(R)-411* during WWII. He trained at the Amphibious Training Base in Little Creek, Virginia during 1945. The ATB had a weekly newsletter named the GATOR. Dad sent several of the GATOR newsletters home. What a find! The 10 March 1945 issue has an article about an LCI sailor who served in the African and European shores of the Mediterranean. Donald McMinn, BM2/c of Div. 10, Unit 125 was aboard an LCI with amphibious forces early in the war. Here is an excerpt from one of his stories. Note the flamboyant writing style of military correspondents during those years.

"The LCI That McGinn was on, and another LCI were doing duty as escort for two LSTs that had to go up the Italian coast one stormy night. For the escort job the LCIs had two depth charges on their fantail and their usual anti-aircraft machineguns to fight off any enemy that might decide to attack the two slow LSTs.

At a particularly stormy moment the lookouts reported two submarines on the port bow of the tiny convoy. The LCIs wheeled at flank speed and charged the two subs like terriers after a pair of bulldogs.



This article appeared on page 9 of GATOR newsletter in March of 1945. Robert Veesenmeyer sent it to his girlfriend, who he later married. She saved it with his letters for next 70+ years.

McGinn, at the forward gun, was sure he was about to see the business end of an Italian gun blow off in his face at any moment, when a hurried signal came from an American PC that the two subs were friendly. They were surrendered Italian fleet units being convoyed to an Allied port.

The PC, which was guiding the subs, had gotten ahead of its wards and in the darkness, had escaped detection by the lookouts.

(cont. page-8)



McGinn wonders what the two little LCIs could have done to the large subs that had four-inch guns in addition to torpedoes. He thinks the skipper intended ramming the enemy and if that happened, he is afraid that his forward gun position would have been just a little dangerous.”

McGinn provided another harrowing account for this article. He recalls one day when his ship was nested with three other LCIs next to a pier in Palermo Harbor. On the other side of the pier was a British coast freighter that was unloading drums of gasoline and cases of ammunition. “Suddenly the AA batteries on the shore started to go off and German bombers were seen coming in low,” explained McGinn.

The first bomb landed 30 feet in front of the LCIs. The second bomb hit the pier and the third went down the stack of the British freighter. “All Hell broke loose as the

gasoline and ammunition started to burn,” McGinn said. The LCIs cut their lines and began to back away, but the submarine nets in the harbor were closed. The four ships had to sweat out the attack in a congested harbor by backing up and going forward. They tried any maneuver to keep moving so as not to give the Germans a stationary target.

McGinn continued, “when things seemed as if they couldn’t get any worse, a bomb hit an Army ammunition train on the beach and filled the whole area with shrapnel and exploding shells.”

McGinn’s LCI made it through the carnage with only one man wounded and minor damage. He remembered it all happened so fast there was no time to be scared. Then he and the crew realized how much worse it could have been if the Jerry’s had better aim.

Excerpts are from Gator newsletter; GATOR Amphibious Training Base Little Creek, VA. Vol. 11 No. 3, March 10, 1945. The inside back cover of each GATOR included a GATOR GIRL. This is movie star Esther Williams helping morale.



Ship's Laundry

Pozzuoli Italy was base to many ships, practicing landings prior to Anzio. Some of the sailors had locals do their laundry, since salt water was not involved. Romilda Villani was one of the laundry ladies and she would send her skinny 9-year old daughter Sofia Costanza Brigida Villani Scicolone to the ships to pick up and deliver laundry. People were poor and became self-supportive.

Little Sofia blossomed by age 14. She entered the Miss Italia beauty contest in 1950. Sofia came in 2nd place at age 15 and caught the eye of contest judge Carlo Ponti. He would help her break into movies and later became her husband.

She soon took the stage name we know her as today, Sophia Loren.



Now that I have your attention, can anyone contribute more?



15-year old Sofia Scicolone is third from the left.

During the early days of WWII the harbor and munitions plant in Pozzuoli was frequently bombed by the [Allies](#). During one raid, young Sophia was running for the bomb shelter when a bomb exploded. She was struck by [shrapnel](#) and wounded in the chin. After that, the family moved to Naples, where they were taken in by distant relatives. Loren and her family returned to Pozzuoli after the allies liberated the town. Loren's grandmother Luisa opened a pub in their living room, selling homemade cherry liquor. Loren's mom played the [piano](#), her sister Maria sang, and Sophia waited on tables, washed dishes and yes, washed laundry for swabbies. The place was popular with the [American GIs](#) and sailors stationed nearby.

“Sofia Lazzaro” was a nick name given her by Italian men, because it was said, her beauty would wake Lazarus from the dead.

Quote attributed to Sophia Loren

“Everything you see, I owe to spaghetti.”
Sophia Loren.

"Now it Can be Told" LCI (R) 765 Takes on a Jap Destroyer

This is truly one of the most intriguing stories of LCI's I have ever come across. We are indebted again to Hank Henderson, LCI(R)-765 for this story which, for obvious reasons, never found its way into the official records.

(A reprint from Elsie Item Issue 40 with additional comments by R E Wright)

Going through one of my albums, I came across an original newspaper clipping reporting the death of W. E. "Billy" Carroll in March of 1945.

There is quite a personal story on this clipping. When I was growing up, Billy was one of my mentors - one of my favorites. He was one of the oldest boys in my Dad's Boy Scout troop. All the way through, Billy was an outstanding person and like an older brother to me.

When I received the letter from my Dad with that clipping in it, I was the PhM on the USS LCI(R)-765. We were working out of Okinawa. At the time we were hauling supplies to the Destroyers and Destroyer Escorts on the picket line just south of Japan. They were the most exposed people in the world; trying to keep the Japanese Navy and Air Force off our backs or at least let us know when they were coming. Those boys really took a beating. We picked up a full load of groceries, ammo and mail and headed north from Kerama Rhetto. We had also received a bag of mail for our crew. We

had been underway for quite some time, almost off the southern end of Japan, when we finally got time to distribute the mail to our crew. The first letter I opened was the one from Dad with the news of Billy's death over the "Hump." He was flying a C-47, the old Goonie Bird work horse, from India to China over the Himalayan Mountains. That is one of the worst flight paths in the world - or at least it was for the old low and slow Goonies. Today, at 35,000 feet in a jet at 600 mph; no problem. Billy's wing man followed him down and there were no parachutes! No one knows why they rode her down instead of jumping. Either way, there was little hope of rescue when you went down in that part of the world.

I read that and sort of blew my stack, I guess. I had lost many friends during the war, but this was too close to home. With the letter in my hand I went storming up to the bridge, faced the Captain, and demanded to be transferred immediately to a forward area. Right then I would have taken on, the whole Japanese nation bare handed. Anyway, the Captain looked at me with a stunned expression on his face. Finally, he said, "A forward area? You want I should drop you off at the Emperor's palace? We have nothing more 'forward' than we are right now! There is nothing between us and Japan except the Japanese Navy, or what is left of it! You surely don't want to transfer to the Jap Navy! "

He noticed the letter in my hand. He took the letter, read it, handed it back to me and said, "I understand, Doc. We are there, so just hang tight."

That night four Jap destroyers tried to break through the picket line. Our destroyers sank three but the fourth got through. We picked him up on radar coming right down our throat at a closing speed of almost forty knots. We had radar and they did not. It was a pitch-black night.

We figured our skipper would order a 90 degree turn and get the heck out of the way. Our little 153-foot landing craft with one 40 mm and four 20 mm guns would be no match for the destroyer's five-inch guns. No way! Bruce (Bruce B. Swegle, LTJG, USNR, our "Old Man" and all of 26 years old) ordered us to load our rocket launchers and he held course.

As we skinned alongside of the destroyer out of the dark, maybe two hundred yards or less from them, we gave them a broadside point blank barrage of 18 five-inch concussion rockets. Did a fast 180 and let loose with 18 more, then headed off into the dark night. The last we saw of the Jap he was limping slowly north toward home with his topsides almost cleaned off.

“Without the element of surprise and the luck of a very dark night we would have been history”

Without the element of surprise and the luck of a very dark night we would have been history long before we got within range. Did Bruce, or any of us, know for sure that the Jap had no radar? No way. But Bruce was the meanest, craziest, and most lucky LT(jg), USNR, in the Navy. Commander Coffin told me some 40 years later that was why he usually gave us such

crazy assignments, and Clarence Coffin, Commander, USN, retired as Rear Admiral, was one heck of a Navy Commander. He was perhaps the Navy version of Marine Corps legend, General "Chesty" Puller. I had the good (or bad) fortune to serve under both men, and Chesty in two wars. He was my CO again during the Korean thing [*Perhaps that is one of the reasons that I am still alive - with Commanders like those two*]

The Captain ordered the Quartermaster to make no entry in the log. He said that if he logged that we had attacked and beaten a Jap destroyer, Commander Coffin (LCI Flotilla 16 Commander) would send him home in a straight jacket. Later Clarence Coffin did send Bruce home almost in a straight jacket but protected by a Bronze Star. That got him a slot as the Executive Officer on a cruiser for the Korean thing, six months of bombarding the heck out of Korea. After the action was over, Bruce called me up to the bridge and asked, "Doc, do you feel better now?" "Yes sir. Thank you, Captain!"

Since that night I have many times wondered if he made the crazy impossible decision to attack that destroyer for my benefit, or if it was just another of the wild crazy stunts that he managed to pull off. Until he died last year he refused to discuss it with me! Some of the crew of the LCI(G) 450 asked about firing a broadside with our rockets. Their launchers were welded to the ramp platforms and deck. Ours were the six-shot variety, three over and three under on rails. Some way the crew managed to swing them straight outboard in the broadside position and lock them in position with zero elevation. But no one would ever admit to it

and the incident was not mentioned again for forty years. The statute of limitations had run out by then!

When we fired the rockets in the normal position - straight ahead at about 45 degrees elevation for the maximum 4,000 or so yard range, the rocket motor scorched the paint on the freeboard of the ship. After those two broadsides the crew spent all their spare time for the next couple of days replacing the scorched paint on the deck and sides of the deck house.

“The original rockets fired by LCIs...came from a Marine mortar squad being carried to a beach head by an LCI”

They were not really designed to operate that way, but during WWII lots of things were modified to do whatever job was required. The original rockets fired by LCIs so the story goes, came from a Marine mortar squad being carried to a beach head by an LCI. They came under heavy fire from the shore. The Marines set up their mortars on the deck and peppered the shore, thus suppressing the shore batteries. The crew of the LCI managed to draw some "midnight arms" - i.e. Marine mortars and ammo, welded the mortars to the deck, and the LCI(R) was born.

Maybe some of you can come up with a different story for the LCI(R) modification, but I have that from some of the guys who were there on that first occasion.

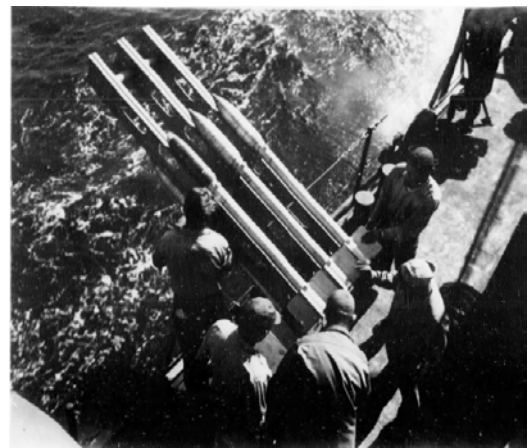
The battle between the *LCI(R)*-765 and a Japanese Destroyer is one of the unrecorded

stories of WWII, except that I think it is in my book, *No Flag for my Coffin*.
-Hank Henderson

Epilogue

I had come across the references to the five- inch rockets in several reports from the War while researching my father's stories. My dad, Robert Wright EM1/c USN was assigned at that time to *LCI(L)*-997 which was part of Flotilla 16. He said that he had received a commendation for diagnosing and repairing the firing circuits while they were testing new rocket launchers.

The following pictures are from the War Diaries of LCI Flotilla 16. From the information available, they appear to be taken aboard *LCI(L)*-762 on December 6, 1944. At the same time these photos were taken, *LCI(L)*-765 was also operating as part of Flotilla 16. While still at Pearl Harbor it was converted adding 6 five-inch rocket launchers, a 40mm mounted on the forecastle and two .50 caliber machine guns. It was re-designated *LCI(R)*-765, before being sent to the forward areas as part of the 5th Amphibious Force.



Side mounted rockets on a LCI

Photos from the War Diaries of LCI Flotilla 16 believed to have been taken aboard *LCI(L)-762*



It is obvious from these photos that the 5-inch rockets aboard the LCI(R)-765 could be fired outboard in a broadside

Our Thanks to:

Arno "Hank" A. Henderson Jr.
May 15, 1924 ~ February 21, 2017 (age 92)

Editor's Note: These LCI rocket conversions may have provided the concept for a new class of LSM rocket ships. On 6 September 1944 the Chief of Naval Operations wrote a confidential memorandum that called for a unique "LSM Rocket Ship." Twelve LSMs were converted to LSM(R)s. They had 105 four and six rail rocket launchers installed on the forward half of the ships. These "Interim" LSM(R)s saw extensive action at Okinawa. They proved their value on beach landings. Three of them were sunk by kamikazes.

Those ships needed to be replaced and many more would be needed for invasion of Japan. The Navy designed a new "Ultimate" LSM(R) Class from the keel up. Forty-eight of these rocket ships would have led the way during landings on the Kyushu beaches at the southern tip of Japan.



Five-inch aircraft rockets fired from a LSM(R).

***Elsie Item* archives are like cruise books for the history of LCIs**

The www.usslci.org website includes a digital copy of each *Elsie Item* newsletter. The #1 newsletter was a 2- pager typed up in a slab-serif 10- point font, on cream colored paper stock. It published in August 1991. Our Portland reunion is coming up May 4-6. Take a nostalgic look back at some of the previous reunion locations, events, articles...and room rates.

27 Years Ago

USS LCI National Association News Letter #1 August 1991- Reunion was held at Lake Wright Hotel, Norfolk, VA, May 16-18. Room rate ??? but cheap.

“REUNION #1 Was held at Lake Wright Hotel in Norfolk, VA. May 16 thru 18th, 1991 with 105 LCI Members Present. On Saturday May 18th, the USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION was born with the election of officers (they will be named later) the 1992 reunion site was selected by the members present, NASHVILLE was selected. At first things were in sort of a turmoil as we officers had no idea where the reunion started and by whom, we had no guide lines at first--we started to ask questions and finally nailed down the person responsible for having enough guts to start the reunion--it was Ted Dey.”

“USS LCI 713. I received my latest copy of Sea Classic Magazine. Contained two pictures of the 713, she still looks like an LCI. The mast has been removed and it

needs a good coat of paint. For some of you home sick LCI'ers it can be located in Portland Oregon, on the Willamette River across from the shipyard on Swan Island on the west bank. Go to the other side of the pier, you will find LST 1166. Take some pictures!!!”

25 Years Ago

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER #5 JANUARY 1993

“1993 REUNION! will be held at Las Vegas, Nevada. The dates will be CHECK IN ON SUNDAY APRIL 18, 1993 · YOU WILL CHECK OUT “THURSDAY APRIL 22”. Our hotel is the HACIENDA RESORT HOTEL. It is the last hotel on the strip. ROOM RATE!!! \$40.00 single or double plus tax, these rooms are located in the TOWERS. Our PRESIDENT negotiated a better room rate of \$30.00, single or double. This is known as the GARDEN ROOM RATE. If you want this rate SPECIFY THE GARDEN ROOM RATE and that you are with the USS LCI NATIONAL REUNION.”

20 Years Ago

***Elsie Item* April 1998 - Reunion May 13th to 17th 1998 Colorado Springs, Colorado, room rate \$83.00 per day.**

“We are now in the final weeks prior to our reunion in Colorado Springs. All plans are coming along very well. This will be a truly memorial time for our shipmates, family, and friends. If you didn't make your hotel reservations or your tour reservations yet, this is your last call. Use the enclosed tear sheet at the back of this newsletter for your

tour reservations. In addition to the program that's included in this newsletter, we will have brochures and maps available for you at the hotel. They will show locations of restaurants and points of interest in the area. On the program you see that we have a tentative Memorial Service noted. It will be held at the U.S. Air Force Academy and should be very inspiring.”

15 Years Ago

***Elsie Item* April 2003 – Reunion scheduled for Washington D.C. at Doubletree Hotel, with a room rate \$96.00 plus tax.**

“A Note From the Editor: The other day a friend, who knew that I had been building models of LCIs, editing a newsletter for old salts, hosting reunions here in Florida, and just in general hob-nobbing with a bunch of old WWII sailors, laughed and said, "Man, you 're a professional WWII Vet"! And I guess there is a lot of truth in that, for these retirement years of mine, which have been taken up with enjoying lots of projects growing out of lifelong interests and concerns, have been made much richer and much more enjoyable by my association with all of you. I'm really thankful for that. It's much more fun than feeding nuts to the squirrels in the park!

When I'm not cussing out my computer for doing me wrong at some crucial spot, I am enjoying this editor bit. For one thing, I get to read lots of stories and see lots of pictures about LCIs that I never would have seen otherwise. To illustrate, the feature article in this issue. At our Florida Reunion I met Basil Woolf who served aboard a British LCI, modified to be a headquarters' ship for

a group called the Support Squadron Eastern Flank, who, in November of 1944, were tapped for one of the most difficult amphibious assaults of the war. The target was the Dutch island of Walcheren, at the mouth of the Scheidt estuary, whose capture was essential if the port of Antwerp was to be available for off-loading critical supplies for Generals Montgomery and Patton. The story was enthralling, and Basil's writing was so good, that I felt compelled to bend my normal self-imposed rule of not publishing long articles. Wow, just so you'll not think I'm playing favorites, I want you to know that I did a good deal of editing on Basil's story. I try to give careful consideration to everything you submit.”

John Cummer

10 Years Ago

***Elsie Item* April 2008 – Reunion is scheduled for Mobile, AL. Room rates at Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel are \$109 per night.**

“Nationally-Recognized Speaker to Highlight Mobile Reunion Banquet “An American In Love With His Country” will be the theme of the Mobile reunion banquet speaker, James Bruce Joseph Sievers. The former Green Beret has spoken to more than 7,000 groups across America during the past 30 years. He comes with the high recommendation of Joe Flynn and the other LCIs in California who heard him at their Pearl Harbor Day luncheon. In addition to his many speaking engagements, Sievers has been invited to the White House to present his program for Presidents Gerald Ford,

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Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush. President Ronald Reagan, along with the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, awarded him the George Washington Medal of Honor for the same presentation he will make to the LCI banquet. Toastmasters International has bestowed upon him the prestigious Communication and Leadership Award. The Daughters of the American Revolution have honored him with their National Medal of Honor. He has been featured in many national publications, such as People magazine, and is a published author with five books to his credit.”

5 Years Ago

***Elsie Item* February 2013 – Reunion planned for Branson, MO September 23-26, Radisson Hotel, room rate \$111.00 plus tax.**

“The USS LCI National Association has chosen the National Museum of the Pacific War and Admiral Nimitz Foundation, Fredericksburg, Texas, as the recipients of its entire archives collection. The archives will be presented to the museum at a special ceremony to be held at the museum on March 9, 2013, to which all LCIs are cordially invited. The collection, assembled by LCI Historian Dennis Blocker, includes hundreds of Action Reports and War Diaries from the invasions of D-Day on Normandy to Salerno, Italy, Anzio, Tunisia, Kwajalein, Einiwetok, Saipan, Guam, Tinian, New Guinea, Philippines, Iwo Jima, Peleliu, Okinawa, and various other places from Alaska to Australia and all places in between. Additionally, the archives include

over 1,000 photographs of LCIs and the men who manned them. The program is scheduled for 1:30 PM, March 9th, in the Ballroom of the Nimitz Hotel.”

3 Months to go

See *Elsie Item* June 2018 – for reunion photos in Portland, OR, held at Sheraton Hotel Portland Airport, room rate \$129.00

Our room rate will be honored for 3 days before and 3 days after the reunion. Here is a list of things to do in the Portland area if you're thinking of spending more time to see all the sights.

1. Powell's City of Books – The largest independent bookstore in the world. With more than 2 million new and used books in stock, you'll need their map to find your way around.
2. Portland Japanese Garden – When the hustle and bustle start to get the best of you, you can seek out the Zen-like tranquility at these fabulous gardens within Washington Park.
3. Portland Art Museum – The oldest art museum in the Pacific Northwest. Collection include European masters, Japanese screen prints, contemporary American, sculpture, photography, and a Native American gallery.
4. Hoyt Arboretum - You can walk through a grove of giant Redwoods.
5. Shanghai Tunnels – Portland was once known as the forbidden city of the west. A series of tunnels exists under the streets that linked hotels and bars to the docks on the Willamette River. A real sailor's town!



2018 USS LCI National Association Reunion Announcement Portland, Oregon May 4-6, 2018



Hello LCI shipmates and friends,

Its reunion time again! We hope you can make room in your schedules to come spend some time with your shipmates, family and friends. This year's reunion is scheduled to be held at the **Sheraton Hotel Portland Airport** and will include a visit to the Pittock Mansion in Portland and tours of the LCI-713 and PT-658. The Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum and the LCI-713 are once again sponsoring the event.

Friday, May 4

Arrival and registration from 4-7:00pm in the Hotel Lobby.

Saturday, May 5

- 8:00am Registration in Hotel Lobby
- 9:00am Business meeting
- 10:00am Memorial Service
- 11:00am Lunch at your leisure
- 12:30pm-4:00pm Pittock Mansion Tour
We will board the bus at 12:15 to depart at 12:30 from the hotel. It's about a 30 minute ride up into downtown Portland for a visit to the Mansion. We'll head back to the Hotel at 3:30pm.
- 6:00pm Back by popular demand, we'll have a group dinner outing to Famous Dave's BBQ by carpool and hotel shuttle.

Sunday, May 6

- 10:00am – 1:30pm LCI-713 and PT-658 tours
The volunteers on the LCI-713 will be on hand for tours of the LCI-713 and PT-658. There will be Navy Bean soup, plenty of coffee and good conversation. The Bus will depart the Hotel at 9:30am
- 5:00pm -9:00pm Banquet Dinner
Starting with a social hour, then Color guard, pledge, opening remarks, dinner, and guest speaker. And Door Prizes!

The reunion officially concludes after the dinner.

We hope to see all of you there! If you cannot attend, send a note. Tell us what is happening in your life, so you can let us all know how our absent friends are faring.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Rick Holmes, AFMM President Email: afmm@amphibiousforces.org Phone: 541-226-5427	John France, LCI National Assn. President Email: lc1540@aol.com Phone: 520-429-3792
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The Reunion will be held at the Sheraton Hotel at the Portland Airport:

8235 Northeast Airport Way, Portland, OR 97220

Reservations: 888-627-7163 **ask for the LCI Group Reunion rate**

They offer Airport and local shuttle service. Cascade Station is a large shopping center nearby

Reunion Rates: Studio Double Queen Suite - \$129 Single or Double (Good for 3 days before and after)

Website: www.sheratonportlandairport.com

Phone: 503-281-2500



The Pittock Mansion

Built in 1914 for one of Oregon's influential families, Pittock Mansion is filled with rich history and remarkable stories.

Henry Pittock, owner of *The Oregonian* newspaper, and his wife Georgiana, built Pittock Mansion in 1914. The City of Portland now owns the estate, and Portland Parks & Recreation and the non-profit Pittock Mansion Society work in collaboration to operate and maintain the museum and surrounding park.

Website:

www.pittockmansion.org



And, of course, the LCI-713!

www.lci713.com

www.facebook.com/lci713



The PT Boat too!

www.savetheptboatinc.com



**2018 USS LCI National Association
Reunion Announcement
Portland, Oregon
May 4-6, 2018**



Complete this form and return with your check made out to Rick Holmes by 4/15/2017:

2018 LCI National Reunion
C/O Rick Holmes
572 Beacon Highlands
Stevenson, WA 98648

Email: afmm@amphibiousforces.org
Cell: 541-226-5427

Event		Cost		# Persons	Total
Registration Fee:	\$20.00 or \$8.00 <i>(Banquet Only)</i>		X		
Pittock Mansion tour <i>Includes Tour and Bus Transportation</i>		\$35	X		
LCI 713 Shuttle: <i>Tour is free, Select this option only if you need a ride down to the ship</i>		\$15	X		
Banquet: <i>Chicken Marsala</i>		\$48**	X		
Banquet: <i>Red Wine Braised Beef</i>		\$48**	X		
Famous Dave's Outing		<i>No commitments - just to get an interested party count</i>			xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
Grand Total:					

****The Banquet Dinners includes a 23% services fee**

Chicken Marsala: Chargrilled, Highlighted with a Rich Mushroom-Tomato Garnished Marsala Sauce, Creamy Mashed Potatoes & Market Vegetables

Red Wine Braised Beef: Slow Cooked Sirloin, Garnished with Bacon, Mushrooms & Onions. Accompanied with Parslied Potatoes and Green Beans

Dinners Include Salad with Balsamic Dressing, Fresh Baked Rolls, Dessert, Coffee, Tazo Teas, and Iced Tea.

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone#: _____

Email: _____

LCI#: _____ Rank: _____ Will you be staying at the Sheraton? _____

LCI sailors witnessed a new weapon of terror

By Jeff Veesenmeyer



“One man, one ship,” was the battle cry of kamikaze pilots.

The Philippines became their training ground.”

Over 700 invasion ships crowded Leyte Gulf in the fall of 1944. Japan’s air power had been crippled by losses at Coral Sea, Midway and the Marianas. Most of Japan’s experienced pilots had been killed. Their dwindling supply of planes were worn out and inferior to new planes operating from the U.S. aircraft carriers. Jap pilots whose planes were already going down in flames were encouraged to hit a ship. At least then a

pilot’s death would be meaningful by crashing into a ship instead of the sea. This all changed with the sinking of a U.S. warship.

On 25 October 1944 one pilot with one plane sank one ship...the escort carrier USS *St Lo* CVE-63. This was the first warship sunk by a kamikaze. It was a planned attack. The pilot volunteered.

Organizing a Special Attack Force with volunteer kamikaze pilots now had the support of Japan's high command.

“The term kamikaze means Divine Wind”

It was a decision forced by desperation. The Japs were losing 10 or more planes in conventional ship attacks that resulted in a single bomb or torpedo hit. They couldn't afford those losses in their effort to turn back a 700-ship fleet.

The term “kamikaze” means Divine Wind. It refers to the typhoon that saved Japan from a Mongol invasion in the 13th century. The Mongol fleet was destroyed by the storm. Now another invading force - transported by the U.S. Navy and allies - was threatening Japan. A Divine Wind...*kamikaze* was needed to destroy them.

Kanichi (a kamikaze pilot's last letter home): *I'll die between eight and nine this morning. As I have already sent some of my stuff in advance, please pick it up at Mitsu Station office. I've resolved to blossom at the end of my life. They are starting up. Sayonara dear Mother and Father.*

One American sailor wrote, “The kamikazes gave their lives for their fatherland in a way that none of us understood. We were not trained that way.” American sailors had no frame of reference for a battle with kamikazes. When it became apparent that every attacking plane was a kamikaze the fear of bogies on radar or the sighting of any plane was terrifying.



Admiral Matome Ugaki, the commander of Japan's Fifth Air Fleet addressing his kamikaze pilots.

LCI(L)-976 arrived in the Philippine combat area in November 1944. Crewmember Jack Ehrbar from Ohio was a radio operator on the ship. He was trained to type in code and could do 50 words a minute. Ehrbar was part of a four-ship flotilla. The *LCI-976* was the flagship. She came under fire from kamikazes for the first time on 12 November. Ehrbar witnessed many kamikaze attacks. The sky would explode with blasts of AA fire from every ship within range. Wave after wave of suicidal kamikazes attacked daily. He recalls seeing one kamikaze crash into the forward stack and conning tower of a cruiser. It was shocking to watch.

That cruiser was the *HMAS Australia*. She was part of the Australian force that included another cruiser, some destroyers, and support ships. They had joined the allied invasion. One sailor's diary entry reads, “At 0530 general quarters were sounded. All

rushed to their respective guns and fired at the approaching Japanese planes. The Australian cruiser *Australia* was about 300 yards from our starboard side. A Japanese plane coming from the stern, flew very low strafing the cruiser. He hit the wireless and crashed on the forward deck and bridge killing the Captain and mortally wounding the Commodore. The cruiser *Honolulu* was hit too. She had to be beached to save her.”

Martin Gilbertson MoMM1/c was also on the *LCI-976*. He remembers going through many kamikaze raids and some very hot landings. “On one beach I was the target of some Japanese snipers.” He had heard some pings and splashes in the water but didn’t know what it was. A jeep pulled up with a couple of dead Japs in the back. MPs asked him if anyone had been hurt because these snipers were shooting at his ship. Those pings were bullets hitting the ships deck. On another beach a snake dropped out of tree and landed in the bow gun tub Gilbertson was manning.



LCI(L)-976 was commissioned on 5 May 1944 with LTJG William C. Lawton in command.

William C. Lawton was the Captain of the *LCI-976*. After unloading on a beach, the crew was anxious to get back out to sea. Lawton would come to the aide of any LCI

that needed a tow off the beach. The favor was returned on the beach at Ormoc Bay when *LCI-976* became beached too.

Although kamikazes were terrifying nothing topped Gilbertson’s experience while getting a ride on a TBF plane. He had island hopped to visit his brothers. On the way back the TBF was attacked by three Jap Zeros. “I almost got sick from the twisting, turning, rolling, and diving the pilot did to evade the Japs.” Some U.S. planes showed up and saved them by shooting down all three Zeros.

Man-made threats from kamikazes, snipers, and Zeros are scary enough, but a sailor faces Mother Nature every day at sea. Both Ehrbar and Gilbertson recall the Okinawa Typhoon just after the wars end. “We were just out of Buckner Bay on the way to Shanghai, China after the Japanese cease fire,” Gilbertson remembered. “We lost the port main shaft and the port generator.” The crew struggled to make repairs while fighting the typhoon. A flat bottomed LCI is not built for heavy seas, it rides like a cork, according to Ehrbar. Sailors called them a “Lousy Civilian Idea.”

Looking back, Ehrbar remembers being nervous and scared during combat and storms but never considered not surviving the war. He’s glad he went but would never want to do it again.

After the war Gilbertson became good friends with Captain Lawton. They lived in the same town, told sea and war stories and shared them with their families.

From shipyards to trash cans

Told by Dave McKay Sr.

It was WWII and Dave McKay's brother, older by three years, was in the 2nd Marine Division. His dad had just come home from working in the shipyards. Dave also worked in the shipyards as an apprentice electrician and hoped to use that skill in the Navy. During dinner, there was a knock on the door. Mom did not want to answer and Dad was busy eating. Dave answered the door and was asked to bring his Dad. His brother had been severely wounded and was hospitalized.

Over the course of time, Dave would ask Dad for permission to join the Navy when he turned 17 in 1944. Answers at dinner were, "You're too short" (5 foot 7 ½ - almost 8!), or "You have not finished school." He heard at least a dozen more reasons why he couldn't join the Navy. Finally, at age 17, Dave asked again and said, "You sign, or I will go to the bar and get the local drunk to sign for me." Silverware dropped on the dinner table and Dad gave in. The Recruiter Chief told Dave's dad to have the janitor open the recruiting office early the next day...the paperwork would be on top of the desk. Dad could sign and leave for work - Dave would have to stay. His sweetheart came to see him off - she had TWO BLACK EYES. She was thinking about him leaving and ran into the wall at the high school gymnasium.

Boot camp was in San Diego. Dave was assigned to be the right guidon bearer (the recruit commander did not know his right from left). After boot camp he managed to wrangle a one week pass to Portland. Then he



Dave McKay Sr. and his son Dave Jr. are part of the LCI-713 team. Dave Sr. served on the LCI 30 and LCI(X) 639.

reported to his station at Alameda, California. From there he would hitch a ride on an AKA to the "Pacific-Southern Frontier." After ONE MONTH in transit, Dave learned what an LCI looked like.

McKay's hope to be a navy electrician fell a little short. He started each day in the galley. One morning began just like any other day with coffee brewing and the smell of breakfast on the grill. That is, until an Officer saw a dirty trash can. Dave was ordered to clean it completely. "Not a job for the cook," was his thought, but orders are orders. Two days later, the can was leaking on the deck due to a split in the seam. Dave was given another order to clean the can. This time he used a fire hose on the weather deck. The pressure from the hose put a fist sized hole through the galvanized can. The can scooted across the deck and slid under the life line chain. Dave couldn't stop it from going into

the drink. As he watched the can sinking in the harbor, Dave wondered how he'd be able to retrieve it. He looked around as the can sank and the solution came to him. "Oh well, no one noticed, and the can was out of sight."

The next morning, it was Shorty's turn to get up early and light off the galley stove. Shorty came down to berthing and woke up Dave, saying "Ya better get up and take a look outside before the Captain gets up." The ship was in the mud at low tide. Five trash cans were on board, and the number six can that failed the *float test* was now visible off the portside. Dave's sweat pumps were on!

About 90 minutes later the Captain approached Dave and asked, "how many trash cans did you clean?" "Five Sir" was Dave's response. The Captain nodded his head, turned and left.

One time while tied up in port, the crew had managed to 'find' a three-wheel motorcycle. They thought it would be useful to haul food or mail out to the pier. It proved to be useful and *fast*. While racing out the pier one day, the driver failed to stop in time and it went into the drink. Some 'civi' workers were down on the pier with a truck. They looked under nourished.

Cooks make bread daily for their hungry shipmates. Dave made a lot of cornbread. He found it was one thing that he could make easier than yeast bread. In exchange for cornbread, the truck crew agreed to pull the cycle out. Members of LCI crew jumped into the water and attached a cable. That night, the cornbread was cut thinner for the crew due to the motorcycle/cornbread 'cumshaw' trade. After that, Dave was given the nickname 'belly robber.'

Naval History

The USS *Constitution* (Old Ironsides) as a combat vessel carried 48,600 gallons of fresh water for her crew of 475 officers and men. This was sufficient to last six months of sustained operations at sea. She carried no fresh water distillers. However, according to her log, of July 27, 1798, upon sailing from Boston, she also carried "7,400 cannon shot, 11,600 pounds of black powder and 79,400 gallons of rum."

Her mission: "To destroy and harass English shipping." Making Jamaica on 6 October, she took on 826 pounds of flour and 68,300 gallons of rum. Then she headed for Azores, arriving 12 November. She provisioned with 550 pounds of beef and 64,300 gallons of Portuguese wine.

On 18 November, she set sail for England. In the ensuing days she defeated five British men-of-war and captured and scuttled 12 English merchantmen, salvaging only the rum aboard each.

By 26 January her powder and shot were exhausted. Nevertheless, although unarmed she made a night raid up the Firth of Clyde in Scotland. Her landing party captured a whisky distillery and transferred 40,000 gallons of single malt Scotch aboard by dawn. Then she headed for home.

The USS *Constitution* arrived in Boston on 20 February 1799 with no cannon shot, no food, no powder, no rum, no wine, no whiskey and ...48,600 gallons of stagnant water.

DAVID'S JOURNEY

by John France 02/17/2018

David Forman was born July 31, 1923. A native of Kings County, New York, he was the son of immigrants. His father Louis was from Latvia and his mother Anna was from Poland. Typical of all young American men in 1942, he wanted to serve his country in the armed forces. His father strongly opposed.

Although David was wary of sea duty, he found a way to support the war effort without further conflict with his father. He joined the Merchant Marine. Sailors of the Merchant Marine were civilians who served on commercial, non-naval ships. They transported vast amounts of war material and troops to all war zones. David did not fully appreciate what he was getting into. The Merchant Marine suffered extreme casualties in WWII. At least 1,614 Merchant Marine ships were sunk or damaged with 67,000 aboard. One out of 26 who served in the Merchant Marine were killed. That was a higher ratio killed than any branch of the U.S. military. An estimated 8,421 were killed and 712 taken prisoner. Those unsung heroes without military benefits did not achieve veteran status until 1988.

David attended an abbreviated Merchant Marine Academy in New York and then set sail in convoy duty. The first convoy was uneventful for David but when part of the convoy split off and entered the Mediterranean, David lost a dear friend when his ship was bombed and sunk.



David Forman MM3/c, LCI-36

David's second convoy was hair raising. They loaded high octane aircraft fuel and 500 lb. bombs off a long pier in New Jersey. They set sail with their volatile cargo and joined the convoy bound for Glasgow, Scotland. In route, they were pursued by a German U Boat Wolf Pack into a dense fog bank. The convoy commander ordered David's ship to fall far behind the convoy out of concern that a torpedo attack on his ship would result in a massive explosion that could sink or damage other vessels in the convoy. It was a lonely night for David and shipmates who could not see more than a few feet in the fog. In the morning, the fog lifted, and his ship was ordered to rejoin the convoy, in the exposed tail end. Again, they were the lepers of the convoy. After a tense journey, they delivered their cargo and returned home to the U.S. After nine months in the Merchant Marine, David had his fill of high seas.

By the time David returned to New York, his older brother Murray had been drafted into the U.S. Army. David decided it was time to get into the military as well. David presented himself in front of the draft board and requested immediate induction. His request for immediate induction gave him the right to select the branch of service in which he wanted to serve. It did not go as planned. At the draft board there were three lines of inductees; one for the Navy, one for the Army and one for the Marines. David looked at the lines and declared that he wanted to be inducted into the Army. An old Navy Chief, who was probably pulled out of retirement to serve on the draft board, reviewed David's paperwork. He roughly told David: "You have had sea duty! You don't get to choose where you are going! I choose where you are going! You are going into the Navy! Now, get in that line!" Thus, December 18, 1943, David was shanghaied into the U.S. Navy.

David completed boot camp in Sampson, New York and then off to Radioman School in Newport, Rhode Island. There, the Navy discovered that David had poor hearing and therefore could not hear Morse Code to the point that he could reliably translate a message. That ended his life as a Radioman. Wondering what the Navy had in store for him next, he was sent to the Philadelphia Navy Yard. There he received additional training while waiting to be deployed overseas. Finally, he set sail on a transport ship for Africa; back to the dreaded high seas.

David was not on terra firma very long in Africa when he was assigned to *LCI (L)-36*.

He boarded her June 15, 1944 in Bizerte, Tunisia as a Fireman 1st Class. He arrived just in time to sail for the invasion on the Island of Elba as part of Operation Brassard. The operation called for the landing of British Royal Navy Beach Commandos, French Commandos, and Free French 9th Colonial Infantry Division comprising of the 4th and 13th Regiments Senegalese Tirailleurs, and a Moroccan Goumier Battalion. *LCI-36* was loaded with fierce looking Senegalese soldiers. Each were at least six feet tall with several lines of scars cut into their cheeks. They sang a beautiful, melodious song onboard that appeared to be part of a religious ceremony. As the newest member of the crew, David was assigned the first watch and was told to be on the lookout for magnetic mines.

On June 12, 1944, Hitler informed German Field Marshall Albert Kesselring that the heavily defended Elba was to be defended to the last man and last cartridge. Unbeknownst to the invading allies, the Germans sent reinforcements to the island on June 14. This set the stage for hotly contested landings of the invasion fleet on June 17. Allied casualties were high among soldiers and sailors. The lend lease HM *LCI-132* was sunk. Casualties onboard USS *LCI (L)-18* included two killed in action as it was pummeled by enemy shell fire – Robert John Maher, Electricians 1st Class and John William Page, Motor Machinist Mate 1st Class.

David's welcome to Elba was to be shot at by German small arms fire. He could hear the distinctive "ping, ping, ping!" of bullets impacting *LCI-36*. This was his first time under fire and he forgot to duck behind

cover. The crew of *LCI-36* unloaded their fierce Senegalese guests and got the heck out of there. By June 20, the Germans gave up and evacuated 400 troops.

Weeks later, David found himself in Pozzuoli, Italy where many LCIs including *LCI-36* established a base of operation. David's younger brother Sidney had been drafted after David set sail for Africa. Eighteen years old Sidney served with the 3rd Infantry Division and had survived the landings and break out from Anzio. David asked his Skipper, Frederick W. Powell, ENS, USNR, if he could visit Sidney. Powell gave David a pass for a few days and an accompanying letter stating that David was not AWOL. David set out in a jeep with a Red Cross driver and headed for Anzio.

In Anzio, David found an enormous mail tent for the 3rd Infantry Division. Inside was a lone quartermaster behind a desk illuminated by one lightbulb. Stacked against the wall of the tent from floor to ceiling were duffle bags containing the belongings of soldiers killed in action. It was there in that dim lighted tent that David was given the dreadful news that Sidney had been mortally wounded on May 30, 1944 during the push from Anzio to Rome. He had first been removed to a field hospital on the beach and then to a British hospital ship in the harbor. He had died on June 2 from his wounds. Ironically, David found a cable gram with Sidney's belongings that Sidney had sent to his father five days before his death. It read: "All well and safe. All my love - Don't worry". Devastated, David visited the large cemetery near Anzio in search of Sidney's grave. He spent hours walking through the muddy graveyard void

of any blades of grass. As he walked, soldiers were still bringing bodies in from the battlefield for burial. He could not find his brother's grave.

With the help of the Red Cross, David found out that Sidney had been transported from the hospital ship to an Army hospital in Naples where he was buried on June 5 in the hospital courtyard. David traveled back to Naples with the Red Cross driver to search for Sidney's grave. There he located his grave and the army chaplain who presided over the burial service. The chaplain told David that he had written to David's parents and that they knew of Sidney's death. Depressed, but finding some solace that his parents knew, David returned to *LCI-36*.

During the following weeks, David and shipmates trained for the Invasion of Southern France. They practiced landings with soldiers of the 45th Division. They also took their turn at gunnery practice with the 20MM cannons. David tried his best to hit the target bobbing in rough surf. By pure luck, he hit the target with a round that skimmed off a wave. That was good enough for his Skipper who was observing the exercise. He declared that David's battle station would be manning a 20MM cannon. David was incredulous.

On August 15, 1944, the allies invaded the coast of southern France. Commandos attacked key strongpoints. U.S. and British paratroopers landed on the high ground beyond the beaches. An invasion fleet of 880 vessels, shelled, rocketed and delivered U.S. soldiers to three beaches east of Toulon. They landed the 3rd Infantry

Division at Cavalaire-sur-Mer, the 45th Infantry Division at Saint Tropez, and the 36th Infantry Division at Saint-Raphael. The U.S. landings were supported by the 1st French Armored Division and were followed by several divisions of French Army B. The allies outnumbered the Germans more than two to one. The Germans were stretched thin over 56 miles of coastline. Worse yet for the Germans was that many of their units were second rate troops. Their best troops were moved north to meet the allied invasion of Normandy in June. Only the formidable 11th Panzer Division was in the attack area, but it was at half strength. The allies inflicted heavy casualties on the Germans who did their best to withdraw their best troops north. Operation Dragoon was a complete success.

Much to David's relief, the invasion of Southern France was not near as exciting as the German welcome at Elba. *LCI-36* discharged troops at Cavalaire-sur-Mer into the tranquil, turquoise waters of the French Riviera. She later retracted from the beach unscathed. Only on the far right of the landing beaches at Saint Raphael did the allies meet serious resistance.

LCI-36 served the next 26 days in the invasion area for the remainder of Operation Dragoon, rendering assistance to other vessels. On September 12, 1944, Rear Admiral Lowry, USN, Commander of Eighth Amphibious Force and Commander, Task Force 84, singled out the 36 and crew

for a special commendation. So was noted in David's personnel file and those of his shipmates.

Southern France was secured but not all the French were happy to see their liberators. An allied bomb, which had failed to drop on its target, was finally jettisoned inadvertently over the city of Marseille with devastating results. Warned of hostile

natives, David and shipmates, who were finally granted shore leave, decided to dress incognito in coveralls. When queried by locals

as to where they were from, David the New Yorker managed to convince them they were from South America!

For the next several months, *LCI-36* made many runs between Bizerte to Sicily and the Italian mainland transporting personnel and supplies. As the war ended, *LCI-36* crew took on several peacekeeping and humanitarian missions to Yugoslavia. There were warring parties shooting at each other over a contested strip of border between of Italy and Yugoslavia. The U.S. Navy sent the "mighty 36" with its menacing 20MM guns to the area to restore order. A shore party from *LCI-36* spoke with the combatants and the shooting stopped. Thus, the war zone was tamed by a lonely LCI.

LCI-36 delivered bags of wheat stenciled with American flags to the starving people of Yugoslavia. Then she was sent to Trieste to collect abandoned Italian soldiers to repatriate in Italy. They had been hiding in the mountains of Yugoslavia long enough for some to marry local girls and have

Much to David's relief, the invasion of Southern France was not near as exciting as the German welcome at Elba.

children. David was amazed to see the children climb aboard.

The year 1945 also brought David a promotion to Motor Machinist Mate 3rd Class in March and a return trip to the United States. In July he was at Camp Bradford, Virginia. While *LCI-36* was being converted to a gun boat, David and shipmates were granted 30 days of home leave. While home in August, the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The *LCI (G)-36* did not sail to the Pacific. David's war was over, but he was still in the Navy.

David was transferred to the submarine base in New London, Connecticut where he served as a crewman on an LCI involved in top secret research. The LCI was full of civilian technicians from General Electric who were developing a new sonar system. From there, the Navy shipped him home to the Brooklyn Navy Yard; one step closer to discharge from the Navy. There he served on an old iron riveted tug boat that had served in the Spanish American War. David believed that you could drop the old tug boat off the top of the Empire State Building without denting the vessel. Its mission was to sail out into severe storms to rescue floundering ships; certainly not a mission embraced by David. He sailed twice into storms on the tug but never saw another ship in the foul weather. He hated the duty, but it was short lived. After about six weeks, on the tug, he was visited by a friend who informed him that his father had died. David was discharged from the Navy shortly thereafter on March 15, 1946. His days on the dreaded high seas were over.

In 1948, David and his family were contacted by the Navy and were asked whether they wanted to bring Sidney home or leave him buried in Italy. David decided to bring his kid brother home and had him buried next to his father in Long Island, New York.

Today, David is 94 years old living in Florida with Naomi, his lovely wife of 63 years. He lives in peace without the slightest desire to return to sea.



Naomi and Dave Forman attended our New Orleans reunion in September 2016.



Forman recalls a safer invasion for LCI-36 in southern France on 15 August 1944.

On This Memorial Day the Heroes We Will Remember

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.—Byron*



This is a list, but not the complete list. It is simply the compilation of names assembled from official reports filed during the war years 1942 to 1945 by many members of the Association. If you know of any addition or correction that is needed; please inform either Director; Robert Wright or Joe Flynn, .

It is organized by the area of the conflict between the European Theater of Operations (ETO) and the Pacific Theater of Operations (PTO). If Known it includes the Action and Date of the event, that resulted in the casualties. The list only includes the LCI if there were casualties as the result of the loss of the ship.

ETO: Atlantic, European, Mediterranean and African Waters

LCI(L) 1

Sunk 8/7/1943

Birzerte, Tunisia

Sicily 7/01/1943

KIA Don N. Mace

KIA Russell R. Stark

KIA Ralph A. Austin

LCI(L) 5

Bermuda 2/27/1943

John J. Gray

Clifford H. Radford

Frank Kopriva

LCI(L) 9

Sicily

KIA Ernest L. Fletcher

LCI(L) 10

KIA Charles Bates

LCI(L) 16

KIA Stoy Kay Alexander

LCI(L) 18

KIA John W. Paige

KIA Robert J. Maher

LCI(L) 20

Sunk 1/22/1944

Anzio, Italy

KIA Donald F. Hamilton

KIA Harold R. Kalshnek

LCI(L) 32

Sunk 1/26/1944

Anzio, Italy - Naval Mine

KIA - George L. Marsh

KIA - Dilbert B. Mallams

KIA - Earl W. Rubens

KIA - Olindo P. Martello

KIA - Jack Elkin

KIA - Thomas J. Brown

KIA - Paul L. Nardella

KIA - William L. Nisbet

KIA - Charles W. Seavey

KIA - John F. Guethlein

KIA - Robert H. Jackson

KIA - Warren B. Johnson

KIA - David A. Purcell

KIA - Eugene L. Sales

KIA - Herbert Stake, Jr.

KIA - George A. Cabana

KIA - John W. Finch

KIA - Charles J. Gilbride

KIA - Ralph Harding

KIA - John E. Campbell

KIA - Lawrence M. Kennedy

KIA - Hamp L. Richardson

KIA - Ralph DiMeola

LCI(L) 33

KIA Walber Kaczyski

KIA Merle Levell

LCI(L) 47

Italy West Coast

KIA Harry Ekey

LCI(L) 76

Italy West Coast

KIA Miles Beck

LCI(L) 87

Normandy

KIA Howel Leary

KIA William Frere

LCI(L) 88

Normandy

KIA Richard I. Frere

KIA Warren J. Moran

KIA Rocco Simone

KIA Wm B. Cole

LCI(L) 91

Sunk on 6/6/1944

Normandy

KIA James E. Atterberry

KIA Leslie Fritz

KIA Ernest Johnson

KIA Stanley Wilczak

KIA Bernard L. Wolfe

LCI(L) 94

Normandy

KIA August B. Buncik
KIA Fletcher Burton, Jr.
KIA Jack DeNunzio

LCI(L) 193

Sicily

KIA Raymond J. Doherty

LCI(L) 209

Normandy

KIA George McAllister

LCI(L) 211

Normandy

KIA Gervese J. Keefe
KIA Charles Veneseke
KIA Loren B. Owens

Bermuda 2/27/1943

Otis H. Merrill
Alton J. Wright
Oliver E Burton

LCI(L) 212

Normandy

KIA Peter Edmond James
KIA Edward James Martin

Bermuda 2/27/1943

J. A. Ryman
W. A. Light
Stafford

LCI(L) 213

Bermuda 2/27/1943

Lonnie L. Albert
Vincent G. Farrell
Leroy R. Chamberlain
Allen C. Jensen

LCI(L) 214

Bermuda 2/27/1943

Charles F. Kennedy
Richard A. Kapff
Jack T. Twiggs
Adam T. Picozzi

LCI(L) 215

Bermuda 2/27/1943

Grant R. Redding
Thomas L. Leonard
Robert C. Gragg
James L. Riley

LCI(L) 216

Normandy,

KIA Maurice G. Boutell

Bermuda 2/27/1943

James A. Hayes
Robert L. Jones

LCI(L) 218

Bermuda 2/27/1943

David H. Muth
Earl L. Roberts

LCI(L) 219

Sunk on 6/11/1944

Normandy

KIA Johnson B. Wiles
KIA Cornelius B. Dorcey
KIA Lester R. Bumps
KIA Albert Combs
KIA Cyril J. O'Connor Jr.
KIA Rolen C. Sikes Jr.

Bermuda 2/27/1943

Russell L. Bloom
Lawrence R. Wallar

LCI(L) 232

Sunk 6/6/1944

Normandy

KIA Howard J. Dague
KIA Roger Huskisson
KIA Walton K. Ellis
KIA Leland A. Glover
KIA Wilbert E. Henke
KIA Roger F. Johnson
KIA George A. Kelley
KIA Robert A. Mett
KIA Mack Penawell
KIA Frank J. Petricca

LCI(L) 232 (continued)

KIA Charles O. Rector
KIA John H. Shroves
KIA Frank Souza
KIA Raphael Weinstein

LCI(L) 237

off Taranto, Italy 10/27/1943

KIA Clyde H. Roberson

LCI(L) 319

Algiers

KIA John C. Scheurman

Normandy

KIA Edward Rybicki

LCI(L) 408

Normandy

KIA Raymond Aubin

LCI(L) 416

Normandy

KIA Arthur Virgil Shields
KIA John Hawkins

LCI(L) 951

Southern France

KIA Floyd Mage

FLOTILLA 2 STAFF

Bermuda 2/27/1943)

John J. Grey
Clifford H. Radford

PTO: Pacific, Southwest Pacific and Japanese Home Waters

LCI(L) 22

Pacific

KIA James A. Barber

LCI(G) 23

SWPA Babatngon, Leyte

Philippine Islands

by Arial bomb

10/23/1944 24 WIA

KIA Theodore Morano

LCI(G) 23 (continued)

KIA George H. Gootee
KIA Loys V. Hayes
KIA Ruben C. Kale
KIA Anthony J. Pulice
KIA Arnold G. Retersdorf
KIA Harold L. Reynolds
KIA Antonio R. Fabian
KIA Robert T. Riordan
KIA Stanley C. Winkler
KIA William E. Dutro

LCI(L) 24

KIA Mahlon F. Paulson

LCI(L) 34

SWPA

KIA Sherman C. Wagers
KIA Edmund J. Baldwin

LCI(L)(G) 65

SWPA Rendova Island

Solomons 7/ 4/1943

by Arial bomb

KIA Hurley E. Christian

at Leyte Gulf 10/24/1944

by Japanese kamikaze

KIA Lester Eugene. Aiston

LCI(L) 69

SWPA Bougainville, Solomons

MIA Thomas W Stanborough

LCI(L)(G) 70

SWPA Bougainville, Solomons

KIA D H Shook

KIA Joseph Byars

KIA Eugene Henry Whalen

Lingayen Gulf, Philippines,

by Japanese kamikaze

KIA Robert Muir Craycraft

KIA Walter G. Kiser

KIA Densil Ray Phillips

KIA Charles Adolph Poole

KIA George Pressley

KIA James Oliver. Vincent

LCI(L) 71

SWPA 10/24/1944

KIA Lawrence Weingartz

LCI(L) 72

SWPA Lingayen Gulf

Philippine Islands 1/9/1944

KIA John R. Mansell

LCI(L) 73

SWPA New Guinea

KIA Kenneth Talley

LCI(L) 74

SWPA

KIA Bernard Yank

LCI(L) 82

Sunk 4/4/1945

Japanese Home Waters

**Okinawa by Japanese suicide
boat**

KIA Hobert G. Heaberlin

LCI(L) 90

Japanese Home Waters

Okinawa 6/4/1945

by Japanese kamikaze

KIA – John P Ross Jr

LCI(R) 338

SWPA Corregidor

Philippine Islands 02/16/1944

KIA Philip L. Michel

KIA John R. Rauch

LCI(L) 339

Sunk 9/4/1943

SWPA at Lae New Guinea

KIA Fay B. Begor

LCI(L) 341

Sunk 9/4/1943

SWPA at Lae New Guinea

Later Refloated

KIA Robert W. Rolf

LCI(L) 342

SWPA at Lae New Guinea

KIA James Earman

LCI(L) 344

SWPA Leyte Gulf

Philippine Islands 10/27/1944

KIA Robert Pumphrey

KIA Jack Lanbert

KIA James Palmer

KIA Edward Woodzien

LCI(G) 347

SWPA Saipan 6/15/1944

KIA Garland Eddington

LCI(G) 365

SWPA Guam 7/16/1944

KIA Charles L Martin

KIA Andrew Lesczynski

KIA Edward W. Nemeth

KIA Clifford W Mossman

KIA Thomas Wilkenson

KIA John J. Gibbs

KIA John F. Harrison

LCI(G) 366

SWPA Guam 7/24/1944

KIA William J. Barry

KIA James F. MacWatty

KIA Carmelo R. Sidoti

KIA Richard C. Steyer

KIA Robert W. Unger

LCI(G) 396

Sunk 1/18/1945

SWPA Palau Islands

by mine

KIA James R. Wirtz

KIA John P. Mannino

KIA Bobby G. Ozbirn

KIA Delonda J. Self

KIA Robert J. Calvert

KIA Oliver E. Cole

KIA Charles V. Foxx

LCI(G) 422

SWPA Leyte Gulf

Philippine Islands 10/20/1944

KIA William Jenkins

KIA Jack G. Johnson

LCI(G) 438

SWPA Saipan 6/26/44

KIA Robert R. Meili

LCI(G) 439

Hawaii 3/25/1944

Jessie J. Marzie

SWPA Guam 7/27/44

KIA Dewey L. Mayes

KIA Donald Rhodes

KIA Lawrence M. White

LCI(L)(G) 440

SWPA Eniwetok 2/22/1944

by friendly fire

KIA Paul M. McGawan

KIA Robert F. Graham

KIA Joseph Mercoli

KIA Thomas F. Smay

KIA Robert Zielinski

KIA Earl L. Miller

KIA Fred J. Spicer

KIA W. Edward Pappen

Japanese Home Waters

Iwo Jima 2/17/1945

KIA Lee Yates

LCI(G) 441

Japanese Home Waters

Iwo Jima 2/17/1945

KIA William T. Connors

KIA William E. Griffin

KIA Jack D. Starbuck

KIA Julian R. Scott

KIA Clinton E. Snider

KIA Glenn O. De Long

KIA Moses Trexler

LCI(L) 442

SWPA Eniwetok 2/22/1944

by friendly fire,

KIA Paul D. Mayes

KIA Gorden McCuiston

KIA George W. Meckley

KIA Fleet F. Willis

KIA Floyd E. Wright

KIA Alexander W. Finney

LCI(G) 449

Japanese Home Waters

Iwo Jima 2/17/1945

KIA - Byron C. Yarbrough

KIA - Frederick Cooper

KIA - William G. Corkins

KIA - Lawrence Bozarth

KIA - John T. Floock

KIA - Bruce Goodin

KIA - Clarence J. Hoffman

LCI(G) 449 (continued)

KIA - William H. Hudson
KIA - Robert R. Minnick
KIA - Ralph Owens
KIA - Lareto F. Paglia
KIA - Carl F. Park
KIA - Howard W. Schoenleben
KIA - William Tominac
KIA - Glenn H. Trotter
KIA - Charles E. Vogel
KIA - Frederick F. Walton
KIA - Leroy Young
KIA - Lee C. Yates
KIA - Harry L. McGrath
KIA Edward P. Brockmeyer *USMC*

LCI(G) 450

**Japanese Home Waters
Iwo Jima 2/17/1945**

KIA Jack H. Musselman

LCI(G) 457

**Japanese Home Waters
Iwo Jima 2/17/1945**

KIA Willard D. Helvey

LCI(G) 466

**Japanese Home Waters
Iwo Jima 2/17/1945**

KIA Thomas E. Coppinger
KIA Huey P. Hester
KIA Charles E. Barton
KIA Glenn A. Foldessy
KIA Robert E. Pipelow
KIA Horace J. Long

LCI(G) 468

Sunk 6/17/1944

Guam by aerial torpedo

KIA Dean L. Beemer
KIA Leslie G. Foss
KIA Dewey A. Hayhurst
KIA Joseph A. Hunter
KIA Lyan S. Long
KIA Robert G. Marquis
KIA Robert Barnett
KIA Robert G. Davis
KIA J.B. Gladdis
KIA Hollis W. Hicks
KIA Steven A. Karko
KIA Woodrow B. Maggard
KIA Ralph E. Parks
KIA Ralph E. Spaugh

LCI(G) 469

Pacific

DOI Robert A Meaux

LCI(G) 471

Japanese Home Waters

Iwo Jima 2/17/1945

KIA Jessie L. Adamson
KIA James F. Bernethy
KIA Richard Cano
KIA Louis P. Hagan
KIA Billie J. Harris
KIA Troy L. Morehouse
KIA William P. Morrissey
KIA Donald Nygard
KIA Richard H. Pond
KIA Jerry A. Terracciano
KIA James W. White

LCI(G) 473

Japanese Home Waters

Iwo Jima 2/17/1945

KIA Joseph Edward Davis
KIA Dominick S. Gonzalez

LCI(G) 474

Sunk 2/17/45

Japanese Home Waters

Iwo Jima 2/17/1945

KIA Daryl G. Huish
KIA Fred H. Gray
KIA Donald S. Rappold
KIA Lester H. Welch

LCI(G) 475

Japanese Home Waters

Okinawa 3/25/1945

KIA Leo P. Selan

LCI(L) 559

Pacific

KIA Donald M. Gross

LCI(L) 568

Japanese Home Waters

Okinawa 4/4/1945

KIA Edward L. Kolodziej
KIA James M. Sweatt

LCI(L) 580

SWPA Leyte Gulf

Philippine Islands 10/20/1944

KIA George C. Thomas

LCI(L) 600

Sunk 1/12/1945

SWPA Ulithi

by Japanese Midget Submarine

KIA Seth Bailey
KIA Glen De Quaisie
KIA Edwin Janacek

LCI(L) 621

SWPA Mindoro

Philippine Islands 1/4/1945

KIA Raymond Carter

LCI(L) 682

Pacific

KIA Thomas H. Reese

LCI(R) 726

SWPA Saipan 6/15/1944

KIA Jerome Pruchnieski
KIA Robert A. Compton

LCI(L) 807

Japanese Home Waters

Okinawa 4/1/1945

KIA Andrew Karsen

LCI(L) 812

Pacific

DOI Walter Siek

LCI(L) 821

SWPA Palau Islands

5/7/1945

KIA Wayne A. Seath
KIA Lee Henley Raigins
KIA Robert E. Kriniak

LCI(L) 974

Sunk 1/10/1945

SWPA Lingayen Gulf

Philippines Islands

by a suicide boat

KIA William W. Baft
KIA Sidney F. Brennan
KIA Emidue J. Falini
KIA Richard E. Kern
KIA Charles Passwater
KIA Thomas F. Sheehan

LCI(L) 979

SWPA Philippine Islands

KIA Martin J. Fleishman
KIA Martin F. Deem
KIA William C. Nordon

LCI(L) 1060

SWPA Mindoro

Philippine Islands

KIA Alexander J. Osowieki

LCI(L) 1065

Sunk 10/24/1944

SWPA Leyte Gulf

Philippine Islands

by Japanese kamikaze

KIA Sigurd J. Bjertness
KIA Wallace W. Hamlett
KIA Michael M. Jalad
KIA Floyd J. Parker
KIA Lester S. Tumbblison
KIA Gordon A. Judson

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

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Attention LCI Veterans and Associates

We need your stories now. Write or email Jeff Veessenmeyer (see addresses page 2).

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Officials from the Naval History and Heritage Command released a logo commemorating the 75th anniversary of the U.S. Navy's experiences in World War II



The blue and gold were selected to represent traditional Navy colors; blue for the ocean and gold for integrity and valor. The anchor represents the services steadfastness and toughness in the face of challenge. The rope on the outside of the design is a symbol of stability and prosperity that keeps us bound together.