

Joint Issue of

ELSIE ITEM

and the

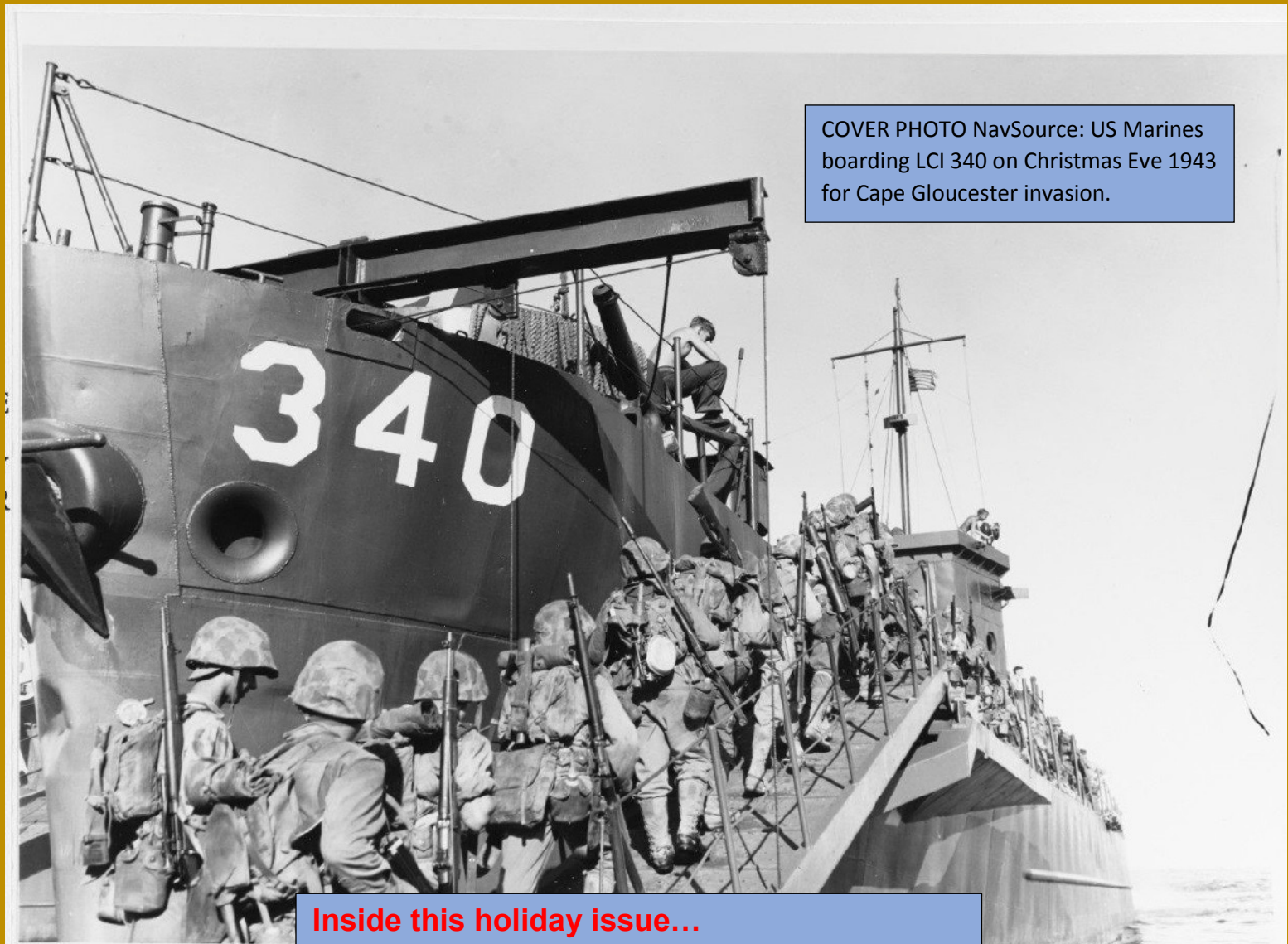
DECK LOG OF THE USS LCI(L) 713

Official Newsletters of the USS LCI National Association and
The Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum



ISSUE 107

DECEMBER 2019



COVER PHOTO NavSource: US Marines
boarding LCI 340 on Christmas Eve 1943
for Cape Gloucester invasion.

Inside this holiday issue...

- LCI-713 restoration and photos
- Membership news and reunion updates
- LCI(L) 69 sailor memorialized



The Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum *Home of the LCI-713*

MISSION

The Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum (AFMM) is an Oregon Non-Profit organization dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the USS LCI 713. Our Mission is to preserve the history of the Amphibious Forces in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, to educate the public on the rich naval maritime heritage that the Amphibious Forces have played in our nation's history, and the importance of preserving historic naval ships for future generations.

Info



Website

www.amphibiousforces.org



Instagram

www.instagram.com/lci713



Facebook

www.facebook.com/lci713

AFMM Board of Directors

Please feel free to contact any of us with any comments or questions.

Rick Holmes

President

afmm@amphibiousforces.org

Rich Lovell

Vice President

rl Lovell22@comcast.net

Mark Stevens

Treasurer

usmc2592179@netzero.net

Dave McKay

Director and Historian

kripochef@aol.com

Jerry Gilmartin

Director

jerry.gilmartin@comcast.net

Pete Stolpe

Director

peter.stolpe@gmail.com

John Ragno

Secretary

jrragno@aol.com

Gordon Smith

Chairman Emeritus, LCI-43 Veteran

Gordon.sharonsmith@gmail.com

The "Deck Log of the LCI-713" is the Official publication of the AFMM. Membership is available to anyone interested in our mission of historical preservation and education. For more info please visit our website

This publication is a collaboration of the USS LCI National Organization and the AFMM.

Notice: The AFMM or USS LCI National Association are not responsible for the accuracy of the content. There is an immense amount of research that goes into some of these articles and we rely on the diligence of the author of each article.



Navy and Coast Guard Veterans of World War II and Korea USS LANDING CRAFT INFANTRY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

MISSION

The USS LCI National Association is dedicated to preserving the history of the World War II Landing Craft Infantry ships and honoring the sailors that manned them. In our publications and website you will find first-hand accounts from the sailors, stories about the battles they fought, the experiences they had, and historical photos.

usslci.org



To learn more about **your** LCI history, **your** collective experiences during the war, and other related LCI information, please visit **your** website. Here you will find all the information related to LCIs that we have acquired. **Enjoy your visit!!**

ABOUT US

- What We Do
- Officers & Executive Board
- AFMM-LCI-713 Alliance
- Non-Profit Status

THE STORIES

- Featured Stories
- Story Archive
- Share Your Story

THE ELSIE ITEM

- Recent Articles Available Online*
- The Archive
- Other Research Resources

THE LCI EXPERIENCE

- LCI Facts
- Combat Awards
- Honor, Valor, Sacrifice
- Reunions
- The LCI-713

* Note: The most recent articles and updates to the site will appear shortly after the publication of each Elsie Item Issue

Your Story



We are always looking for stories and memories of your LCI service. Although we are primarily interested in your experiences aboard an LCI ship, we are also interested in the circumstances leading up to your entry into the Navy and the impact that your WWII experiences have had on your postwar life.

General guidance on sharing your story can be downloaded from the Association website: usslci.org/share-your-story/. Any letter to the editor can be sent to **Jeff Veesenmeyer (JeffreyMktg@gmail.com)** or the postal address below.

Contact Us



EDITOR

USS LCI National Association
% Jeff Veesenmeyer, Editor
659 Granite Way
Sun Prairie, WI 53590
(608) 692-2121

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

USS LCI National Association
% Robert E. Wright, Jr., Treasurer
P.O. Box 407
Howell, MI 48844
(517) 548-2326

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Email TheCrew@usslci.org

“Elsie Item”: 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.

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

A Visitor From Back East

Rick Holmes, AFMM President

It was a cold weekend on the Willamette as the AFMM crew made their way to *LCI-713* moored at Swan Island. Tagging along was Robert Megerdichian and his son, Greg. They had flown to Portland from Newberry, Massachusetts, near Boston. Robert had learned about *LCI-713* and needed to take an up-close-and-personal inspection: His dad, a cook, had kept a notebook that showed where *his* ship, *LCI-638*, had served in 1945. Robert *needed* to know what duty on board *LCI-638* had been like. According to NavSource, *LCI-638* was laid down in June 1944 at New Jersey Shipbuilding. It was a round-conn, side-ramp vessel, and later converted into an LCI (M) – mortar. As *LCI(M) 638* the ship took part in the 1945 invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Our historian, Dave McKay, Jr., accessed his laptop for dates and details of *LCI-638*'s other deployments in the Pacific theater of operations. On his laptop Robert had a few snapshots of *LCI-638*'s crew. On board *LCI-713*, Dave McKay Jr. led the Megerdichian's through our on-board museum. Robert's dad was a cook on *LCI-638*. J. Wandres showed off the restoration of our galley done by Rich Lovell and his crew.

It was as Greg and his dad, Robert, were about to go ashore that the father choked up and had to wipe his eyes: After having only a snapshots of his dad's service, he was able to visit a ship like the one his father had serve on: it had finally become *real* for him.

And that is what preservation of AFMM's *LCI (L) 713* is all about. We continue toward our goal to get into dry dock, repair the hull, install the engines, and finally get underway. We need your help to make it *real* for our veterans and their families.

Here's how you can help:

- Make a donation to the AFMM by year's end.
- Become a member or upgrade your membership level.
- Purchase a membership for your family or friends this holiday season.
- Sign up to volunteer in 2020
- Include us in your will, living trust, life insurance proceeds or retirement plan.

***Yes, I want to help launch the LCI 713!
Happy holidays to all!***

For more information, call me at 541-226-5427 or email afmm@amphibiousforces.org

Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum
Rick Holmes, President
PO Box 17220 - Portland, OR 97217

*Note: If you don't want to use the form, it's ok...
However, please keep us up to date on your contact
info for our mailings. Thanks!*

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____ to help get the LCI-713 underway.

- Lifetime Membership \$500 Lifetime Veteran \$100 Annual Member \$20
 Lifejacket Memorial \$250 (We will contact you for an inscription)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Vet (Y) or (N) _____

LCI or Ship affiliation _____ Branch/rank _____

(You may also contribute online via our website)

- My company offers a matching gift program.
 Contact me about setting up an automatic monthly direct donation.
 Send me information on including a legacy gift in my estate plan.
 I would like to volunteer.
 I would like to sponsor _____

My Gift Is: In Memory of In Honor of

Person's name _____

AFMM and LCI-713 Board of Directors

Please feel free to contact any of us with any comments or questions.

Rick Holmes

President

afmm@amphibiousforces.org

541-226-5427

Rich Lovell

Vice President

rlovell22@comcast.net

971-570-7231

Mark Stevens

Treasurer

usmc2592179@netzero.net

503-334-7365

Dave McKay

Director and Historian

kripochef@aol.com

503-577-6627

Jerry Gilmartin

Director

jerry.gilmartin@comcast.net

503-330-4059

Pete Stolpe

Director

peter.stolpe@gmail.com

John Ragno

Secretary

jrragno@aol.com

503-644-0636

Gordon Smith

Chairman Emeritus, LCI-43 Veteran

Gordon.sharonsmith@gmail.com

360-256-5901

Observation from Officer's Country by Robert E. Wright Jr. President

This 2019 year end issue of the ELSIE ITEM should reach your mail boxes sometime around December 7, 2019. For all the veteran members of the Association, little needs be said to emphasize the significance of "the Day of Infamy". It was the day that changed the course of the lives of every living person of the United States of America. On that fateful day, everyone in the country realized that in the years to come, many sacrifices would have to be made if the United States was to going to remain " the Land of the Free". I have highlighted just one story in this issue out of the millions that occurred during the war. Please take a few minutes and share the life of Thomas W. Stanborough.

In the summer of 1941 Frank Knox, the Secretary of the Navy, visited the U.S. Marine Corps base at Paris Island, South Carolina. He was there to review a demonstration of the nation's Amphibious capabilities. He watched intently as a platoon of Marines paddled ashore in large rubber rafts. It was reported that he was quite impressed with the Marines' demonstration. The fact was it varied little from the very methods the Marines had employed before the US Civil War at Vera Cruz Mexico in 1847. During the intervening 94 years, little had changed. On this summer day the United States of America was unaware that it was completely unprepared for the war that they would be drawn into before the end of the year.

Japanese Admiral Yamamoto is often quoted as saying, "I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve." Historians say that the quote is essentially a Hollywood fabrication, and not actually based on any fact. But never-the-less, the American Giant did arise, and if we focus on just our Navy's Amphibious capabilities, by 1945 America out-manned and out-produced every nation on the earth combined. When the US Army and Marines landed on Okinawa in 1945 the first waves were comprised of more than 1400 LVT's (landing vehicle tracked) followed by an alphabet soup of ships and craft, including LCT-As, LCVPs, LCIs, LCMs, LCTs, LSDs, LSMs, and LSTs. By nightfall of the first day of the invasion, 60,000 men, their equipment and supplies were ashore. There is no record of any Marine platoons rowing ashore in rubber rafts.

Even though Veterans' Day 2019 is past, I would like to express my appreciation of all the men and women who served our country during those desperate days of World War II, and during all the years of war and peace that have followed. As long as we continue to tell your stories, it may remind your fellow Americans of the sacrifices that were made, that provide the freedoms that we enjoy today.



Gator Gossip

By Jeff Veesenmeyer

the LCI 1024. Charlie is a teacher in Japan. He is an avid scuba diver and enjoys exploring relics from WWII. Here are several of the photos he took while diving on LSM 469.

I Received this phone message from Harry Ritzel regarding the article "LCI's Slick Sleeved Chief." This article appeared in Elsie Item 106, September 2019.

"Hi Jeff, Harry Ritzel here. My God you did such a magnificent job on that article. You made me sound like a hero, I'm not a hero but thank you. Fabulous article, thank you, thank you so much.

Harry Ritzel.

Hi Jeff,

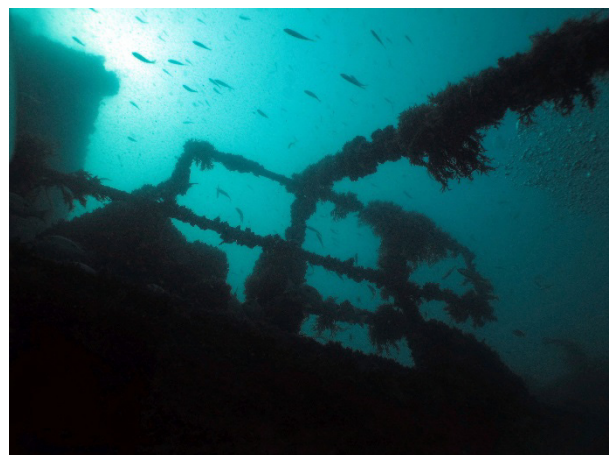
I loved the "Crossing the Line" article in issue 106. Great stuff!

*I thought I'd share a few pix I took diving the former LSM-469 off Pattaya, Thailand. The LSM (Landing Ship Medium) was the next generation LCI class lander, of which 558 were built in 1944-45. This particular ship saw occupation duty in Japan after the war, was decommissioned in 1946, laid up in the Pacific Reserve Fleet, and finally sold to the Royal Thai Navy in 1962, renamed the *HTMS Khram*. In February 2003 it was sunk as an artificial reef off Pattaya, and now lies in 30 meters of water for us divers to enjoy. It's well worth a look if you're a diver and happen to be in Thailand.*

All the best,

Charlie Ritz

Editor's Note: Charlie Ritz is the son of Commander Edward J. Ritz USNR, captain of



LSM 469 was commissioned on 17 March 1945 with LT Lee S. Barton USNR in Command.

SEND LETTERS TO: JeffreyMktg@gmail.com or my mailing address listed on Page 2.

Squared Away and Underway (soon?)

Two Thousand Nineteen has been a productive year for Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum and the dedicated volunteer crew. AFMM hosted several groups of visitors. At the LCI National reunion, the Debonaires chorus from Portland's Parkrose High School serenaded the veterans with a stirring medley of songs, including "God Bless America."



2019 LCI Reunion Vets with the Debonaires.

We hosted the Military Vehicle Collectors Club, and their 2 ½-ton DUKW—an amphibious, six-wheel truck used in World War II. Other groups included the Oregon-Washington chapter of the Antique & Classic Boat Club and the drum & Bugle Corps from Baker City, Oregon.



The MVCCO arriving by "DUKW."



The Antique Boat Club with the drum and bugle corps playing on the Foc'sle.

One comment we heard again and again was how much progress AFMM has made in restoring and cataloging improvements to the *LCI-713*. Lin Stott comes in from Salem to work on radio room equipment.



Lin Stott in the Radio Room.

Rich Lovell and others have mounted extensive photo displays in the two museum compartments – Troop Two and Troop Four (aft), newly painted by John Ragno. Photo displays chart amphibious support of Allied invasions from Anzio (Italy), to Normandy (France), to Zamboanga on the island of Mindanao.



Among displays is a photo of Coast Guard signalman Douglas Munro. He grew up in South Cle Ulum, a village 80 miles east of Seattle, along I-90. During the Guadalcanal campaign, in September 1942, Munro, while wounded, piloted his Higgins boat to shield from Japanese shore fire, other landing craft filled with U.S. Marines attempting to evacuate their position which was threatened by the larger Japanese force. His action is said to have saved the lives of 500 U.S. Marines. Posthumously, he was awarded the Medal of Honor. A Marine Corps musical march is named in his honor, and Munro is the only non-marine to share the Wall of Heroes of the National Museum of the Marine Corps.



Douglas Munro



Some of the great work Rich Lovell has done putting historical displays together.

AFMM has increased and improved its ability to communicate: The ship is now hooked into three-phase electrical shore power. No more noisy, 8KW generator fueled by jerry cans of diesel fuel. Now, LCI-713 has 24-hour security for the ship.



Jerry Gilmartin with our new transformer.

Shore electric power also lets Mark Stevens use an arc welder to fabricate new and safer access ramps from the PT-boathouse, across the Rhino barges, and onto the ship. Potential tripping hazards have been painted white or marked with yellow safety tape.



Mark, Lin and Phil installing new access ramps.

Our Public Affairs specialist, retired navy journalist J. Wandres, had feature articles published in local newspapers, and contributed research and articles for AFMM's *Deck Log – Elsie Item* publication. AFMM is now on Instagram @lci713. Please follow us there; it helps with our fundraising efforts.

It all sounds impressive – and it is. A grant from the Kinsman Foundation allowed for a structural survey of the ship and paid for the new electrical equipment. The survey inspection shows *LCI-713*'s hull able to withstand being hauled into dry dock or lifted onto a submersible barge.

AFMM is storing dozens of 8 X 20-foot sheets of steel plate and I-beam for new T-Bar structural supports. Each plate has been pre-primed, but all the I-beams had to be treated with Corro Seal (A rust inhibitor). But these plates are not going to help AFMM re-launch *LCI-713* until we can raise the money to put the ship into drydock.



Rick and Jerry with the steel.

We are also making some improvements to the Engineer workstation in the engine room, with installation of a clock and alarms and new engine gauge housings have been fabricated and are being installed.



Jerry installs a clock at the engineer's workstation.



The wood floating pier has been re-floated and damaged portions removed. The second Rhino barge has been cleaned and painted and will be used as a secondary access to the LCI.



We didn't forget about outside displays - Mark and Phil permanently mount a 20mm (welded in place) in the #2 spot.



Battery powered bull horn racks were mounted inside the booby hatch.



More Eagle Scout projects on the way!

From Navy Bean Soup to Electrical Safety Code Sign

It probably would have been enough for AFMM's Rich Lovell to feed the AFMM crew his legendarily good Navy Bean Soup. But he also brings potable water and snacks to the ship for the crew while work continues to restore *LCI (L) 713*. And he regularly posts foodie photos on Instagram and Facebook.

Working from his home wood shop Rich continues to improve and expand *LCI-713*'s museum displays, now open in Troop #2 and Troop #4. Making it easier for visitors to take a self-guided tour, Rich is developing on-board signage to help (non-navy) visitors to understand the role of *LCI-713* and amphibious ships in World War II in the Pacific.

Rich and his wife still make their regular weekend garage sale voyages. Lovell brings back some outstanding artifacts for the museum. Who knew that some veteran had held on to metal data plates from enemy planes during the Mediterranean campaigns in World War II? Among artifacts in the Troop Four Museum is a Homing pigeon roost.

Visitors to *LCI-713*, moored in Portland's Swan Island lagoon might also notice the two dummy owls that keep watch over the ship. Someone should create a "medal" for their work in keeping gulls and other unidentified "enemy" from "bombing" the ship.

Remember the memorable cover of *Deck Log* from December 2016? The top half had a black and white photo of *LCI-713*'s crew, somewhere in the Pacific. The bottom half of the cover showed a local troop of Scouts in "cammies," posing in about the same positions as the crew. Providing a training scenario is an important role in AFMM's

mission. Here, Rich Lovell has coordinated on the design of a work plan for the next Eagle Scout candidate who comes aboard *LCI-713* for his project.



The 713 galley crew serves up another batch of Gordon's Navy Bean Soup with prep help from Rich Lovell (middle) and serving help from Jeff and Elizabeth.

Safety and Sure Footing

To many who have visited *LCI-713* this year, getting on board the ship included walking down a long ramp from the shipyard, and crossing through the PT-658 boathouse. Then, it was stepping onto and crossing a barge, crossing open water to another barge, then to a third barge before accessing the LCI via the open bow ramp.

To address safety concerns, AFMM has added additional safety features. Temporary ramps from one barge to another have been replaced by welded steel ramps with hand-rails. White safety lines indicate where visitors are to walk. Upon accessing the LCI itself, the bow ramp has a welded hand-rail, and the open mesh ramp itself is covered with a non-skid fabric cover. Open hatch doors that lead into the ship have been painted white to highlight the raised openings. For safety and security all museum display cases have been covered with clear Plexiglas.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

DON'T SWEAT IT

Holy Bible NASB

Psalm 37: 1-7, Hebrews 13:5

Holy Bible KING JAMES

Psalm 136:1, Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:25

My reading of the Psalms continues with 37:1-7. It is a message to all followers of God and Jesus Christ; that believe that the Bible is God's word.

The entire passage noted above is printed below. As you read these verses, please note the emphasis on the underlined words:

A Psalm of David 37:1-7

¹ **Do not fret** because of evildoers,
Be not envious toward wrongdoers.
² For they will wither quickly like the grass
And fade like the green herb.
³ **Trust in the LORD** and do good;
Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.
⁴ **Delight yourself in the LORD;**
And He will give you the desires of your
heart.
⁵ **Commit your way to the LORD,**
Trust also in Him, and He will do it.
⁶ He will bring forth your righteousness as the
light And your judgment as the noonday.
⁷ **Rest in the LORD** and wait patiently for
Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in
his way,
Because of the man who carries out wicked
schemes.

Are you concerned, as I am about evil in so many areas around us? Live righteously and God will deal with it in his own way and in his own time. "Don't Sweat It"

As we approach Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year, what a blessing it is to know that God is real. The Psalmist in Psalm 136:1 says "Give thanks to the Lord for it is good and His mercy endures forever".

Christmas reminds us that God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ and was called Emmanuel ie "God with us". Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:25. He made himself available to all mankind. To know Him and know He is present with us as we face another year should be of great comfort. He has promised "I will never desert you or never forsake you". Hebrews 13:5. I say again "Don't Sweat It". Trust God.

Ebenezer (I Samuel 7:12)

RM-1/C Abe Laurenzo LCI 47, 409



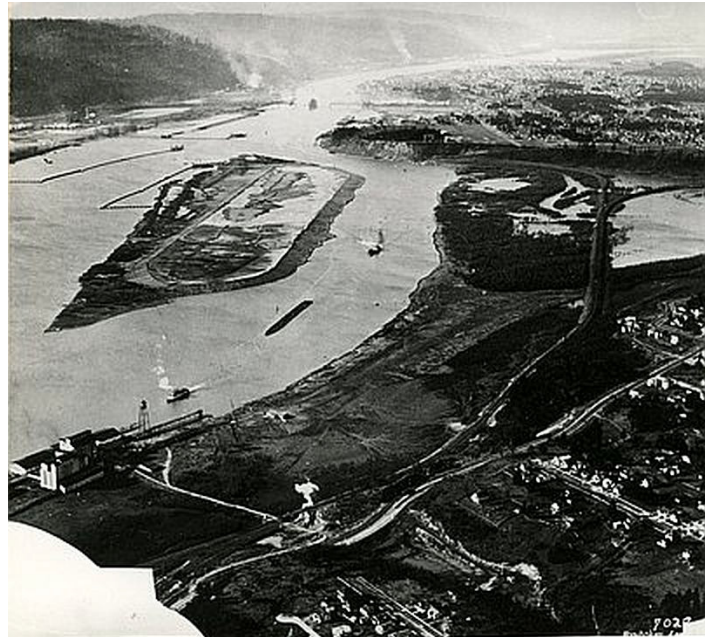
From Adidas to the *Artisan*

AFMM's weekend "forward OP" is located, conveniently, in a McDonald's on Portland's Swan Island. (See: factoid at the end of this piece). On a recent weekend a gent named Steve Bland showed up in freshly ironed BDUs. He had heard about AFMM and the LCI from Mark Stevens, who also volunteers at the Oregon Military Museum at Withycombe, in Clackamas Township.

How could he be of assistance, Steve asked. Smiles around the table. It turns out Steve Bland is a welder. It also turns out that there are numerous jobs on board the LCI that require welding. We also welcomed to the volunteer crew, DuWayne Diviedrich, Dennis Weehunt and Peter Stolpe.

Pete is on the marketing staff of Adidas, the giant sportswear company. The Adidas headquarters building in North Portland overlooks Swan Island. It is not known if from his desk Pete Stolpe can see the LCI. Whatever, he has come on board to help spread the word about the ship and its nonprofit naval history museum. Among projects will be a direct solicitation to scores of maritime service companies in Portland, up and down the Oregon coast, and Washington.

And now you know: Swan Island is not a natural island in Portland's Willamette River. It was constructed of landfill in the 1920s to be Portland's municipal airport. The "island" was connected to the mainland by a causeway. The airport opened on September 14, 1927, and featured a fly-in by Charles "Lucky Lindy" Lindberg, in the "Spirit of Saint Louis."



Swan Island Airport in 1927.

In the period after World War II when commercial aircraft became larger, the Swan Island strip was inadequate, and the airport was closed in 1946. The island now serves as headquarters for several freight forwarding companies, the North American headquarters of Daimler, and the former Vigor Ship Repair facility at the western end of the island. Vigor's facilities include the World War II floating drydock, the former USS *Artisan*.



The terminal at Swan Island Airport in 1935.

Just a regular boy

By Robert Wright Jr.

Thomas William “Tommy” Stanborough was born on July 22, 1922, in New Orleans, the youngest son of a Master who was serving in the U.S. Merchant Marine. Tommy was an active youth who was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts, and with the Sea Scouts, was a thespian and held leading roles in several school productions, and participated in sports while in Metairie High School from which he graduated in 1940. He wanted to go to sea as his father had done.



Thomas J. Stanborough

A Survivor of the U.S.S. *Arizona*

Tommy enlisted in the U.S. Navy on his 18th birthday, July 22, 1940. He received his basic training at San Diego, and on



USS Arizona BB 39

September 14, 1940, he was selected honor man of his company of 128 recruits. Tommy was assigned to the USS *Arizona* on October 1, 1940. In one year Apprentice Seaman Stanborough applied himself to his new career and by the end of November 1941 he had attained the rating of Seaman 1st Class. He was aboard ship on the morning of December 7, 1941, when the Japanese attacked the naval base at Pearl Harbor. Here are Tommy's words, written to his mother, Catherine Stanborough of Metairie, Louisiana, regarding that eventful day:

"I was up in the lookout tower about 8am when I was first hit. A shrapnel shell exploded and gipped my left leg... later on after we abandoned ship and started swimming for shore 600 feet away I was struck in the right wrist by machine gun fire from a low flying Jap plane."

Tommy didn't talk much about the attack after that one letter. The magnitude of the event and the loss of his shipmates weighed heavy on his heart and mind for the remainder of his short life.

The long war had just begun and already he had earned a Purple Heart.

Coxswain of a Higgin Eureka Boat in North Africa

In February 1942, after surviving the sinking of the USS *Arizona*, Tommy was sent back to New Orleans, which was close to his home in Metairie, to receive training on the Higgins, Eureka, Landing Boats (LCP and LCP(L)). After graduating with honors from this training, he was then transferred to the crew of the newly commissioned USS *George Clymer* AP-57 along with a new rating of Boatswain's Mate 2/c. In October 1942 the *Clymer* was assigned to the Northern Attack Force as part of Operation Torch. Their assignment was Green Beach, Port Lyautey (Mehdia) French Morocco landing the 2nd Battalion (reinforced), Ninth Infantry Division of the US Army along with 3400 tons of ammunition and supplies. D-Day was November 8, 1942. Just 11 months after being wounded at Pearl Harbor, and he was back in the war again on the other side of the world.

Photo No. 19-N-34169 USS George Clymer (AP-59) on 1 September 1942



USS George Clymer AP 57

The *Clymer* After Action Report dated November 20, 1942, included these details of the Amphibious Operations. *At 0000 the H-4 hour we commenced ship to shore operations while lying to, ship darkened, in the transport area. Boats were lowered and*

troops commence to debark immediately....15,700 yards bearing 295 degrees True to the center of Green Beach. The immediate mission of the battalion was to silence the fort of Port Lyautey located a short distance from to the eastward overlooking Green Beach. Visibility Good and the sea smooth with heavy swells... The first wave from the Clymer landed shortly before 0530. About dawn the boats from the first 3 waves started returning. Reports from the coxswains indicated that the surf was from 5 to 6 feet high and that landing and retracting was feasible...just about dawn strafing by planes and gunfire from shore batteries slowed down the unloading, resulting in many boats being stranded and damaged by gun fire.

This is what Tommy had to say about that assignment:

"In the landing of troops in French Morocco there was perfect coordination between all branches of the American service. It was a perfect teamwork. Every man in it knew what he and the other fellow had to do - and did it with lots of spirit and courage. I was operating a small landing boat. We would land a detail of soldiers, and if there was nothing which we had to do toward seeing that the troops got under way, we spun around and ploughed back to our ship. One of the most thrilling parts of the landing was the whole-hearted reception we got from the French. Most of them were in tatters, and many of them were practically starved. We dug up dungarees and wholesome food for them. Their shouts of welcome and gratitude made us feel mighty glad that we were fighting with the Allied forces."

It appears that Thomas Stanborough was trying to maintain the family spirits back

home and to keep them from worrying. The *Clymer* Action Report included: The following recommendations for special recognition of officers and enlisted personnel in connection with Operation Torch: *The following coxswains of landing boats from the U.S.S. George Clymer for exemplary courage and disregard for their personal safety while under enemy gun fire and strafing attacks ... (unreadable text)..ships landing boats and discharged troops and equipment on "Green Beach", Port Lyautey (Mehdia), French Morocco, Africa, during the period 7-11 November 1942.*

Included was the ships Captain's recommendation: *Stanborough, Thomas W, boatswain's mate second class to boatswain's mate first class.*

Back to the Pacific

Following Operation Torch in North Africa the USS *George Clymer* returned to the U.S. There it was designated Attack Transport APA-27 and was reassigned to the US Navy Pacific Fleet and sent to Pearl Harbor. The *Clymer* became part of the Third Amphibious Force which was tasked with taking the Solomon Islands from the Japanese.

On May 2, 1943 Thomas, arrived on his new assignment, the USS *LCI(L) 69* which had been commissioned on December 24, 1942, back in the states and had just arrived in the Southwest Pacific theater, only weeks earlier following the long transit from Texas. It too was part of the Third Amphibious Force. Thomas Stanborough just 20 years old, with almost 3 years of service in the US Navy, may have been most experienced navy man aboard that LCI.

Heroism (and death) in the Solomons

By 1943, Tommy was serving aboard the USS *LCI (L) 69*, near Banika Island (note: in the Russell Islands, Central Solomon's) in the South Pacific Ocean, under the command of Frazelle L. O'Leary, U.S.N.R. He had risen from the rank of Seaman Recruit to Boatswain's Mate, 1st Class, when he met his death by drowning in the Solomon Sea on Sunday, May 30, 1943, at 6:30 p.m. Here is an account of the details surrounding his death, as written by Rear Admiral Randall Jacobs in a letter to Tommy's mother:

"At approximately 6:30 in the evening on 30 May 1943, the ship on which your son was a member of the crew noticed that a ship ahead in column had stopped, turned on a searchlight, and showed a man overboard. Your son's ship was maneuvered into a position alongside the man overboard. The man overboard was a passenger soldier, who was found to have a broken arm, and was unable to utilize any of the life saving aids thrown to him. Then your son went over the side of the ship (held by three other enlisted men). During the endeavor to bring the soldier aboard, the heavy seas and strong current swept him from the grasp of his mates and both men were swept away from the ship. Stanborough had given his life jacket to the injured soldier. Although he did have hold of a life ring, he let that go in order to go to the aid of the soldier. After both men had been picked out again by the searchlight, your son drifted away before the ship could be maneuvered to pick him up. An extensive search was made to no avail, and it is presumed that your son's death occurred by drowning."

A follow up letter arrived informing Tommy's parents that he was recommended posthumously for a citation for his heroic actions; however, no award was ever forthcoming. Tommy is memorialized on the Wall of the Missing at Fort McKinley in Manila, the Philippines, and also in the Louisiana Memorial Plaza at the U.S.S. *Kidd* Veterans Memorial Museum in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. After the war, the Veterans of Foreign Wars established the Thomas W. Stanborough Post No. 4275 in Metairie, but it is no longer in operation.

Notes: Much of the personal content of this article came from The United States Navy Memorial in Washington DC web site www.navymemorial.org. It in turn was obtained from other web sources authored by Evelyn Park Blalock. Dates were confirmed and additional events were obtained for this article by Robert E Wright Jr., from available US Navy historical documents. USS Arizona and USS George Clymer photos from NavSource. www.navsource.org



Stanborough's plaque at Veterans Memorial Museum in Baton Rouge, LA

In Memoriam

LCI 464
Philip Herrick

LCI 527
James Houlihan

LCI 582
Esten Kee

LCI 609
Richard Hamann

LCI 684, 979
Fredrick Jr. Engelken

LCI 874
Bennie Lee Pratt



The Ammo Barge on Omaha Beach

By Steve Besse XO LCI 420

One of my experiences aboard my ship, the LCI 420, was almost too exciting. I was the Executive Officer. We had already made a number of landings on Omaha Beach during D-Day. Some of our sister ships had been lost to land mines and shells. We were fortunate. Our only casualty was our barrage balloon. The German 88s were using it for a target. After several hits it was blown off the fantail.



Lt. Steve Besse from Corvallis, Oregon enlisted in the Navy February of 1942.

We were on our way into the Channel to get more soldiers from a troop transport and take them into Omaha Beach when we received new orders. A tug towing a barge had hit a mine and was sunk. We were ordered to tie up to the barge along with LCI 417. We tied up to the starboard side and 417 had the portside. That was when we were advised to use extreme caution,



USS LCI 420 was the Group 35 Flagship Commander during D-Day landings.

because we were towing a barge loaded with 1,000 tons of open ammunition.

It was night-time and the Germans had opened-up with everything they could. The sky was full of fireworks like a hundred 4th of July celebrations all together. There were tracers flying every which way and shells bursting all around our ship. We just hoped and prayed nothing would hit our barge.

“Wrong Beach!”

We were nearing the beach when we were waved off – wrong beach! We backed down and got off that beach just as a shell hit where we had been moments before. We motored down another 1,000 yards – using each LCI as a single screw – and headed into the beach. We came in fairly-fast so as to put the barge up on the sand. Everything

went well. We docked the barge and instead of unbending the lines, we cut them with an ax and got off the beach as fast as we could. It was a job well done.

Fireworks have never been a thrill for me since then.

This story was submitted by Steve Besse who was the Executive Officer on *LCI 420* during the D-Day landings. The *420* was featured in an Elsie Item article that published November 2016. Besse was also interviewed by a Corvallis, Oregon newspaper, the "Gazette Times," in 2015. A few of those excerpts follow here.



USS LCI 420 landing 200 more troops.

"We made about 10 different beachings onto Omaha Beach." Besse continued, "After each beaching, we would go back out to sea about 10 miles to the troop transport and pick up more troops and bring them back to Omaha, under pretty heavy fire."



Steve Besse during the 2005 reunion aboard the LCI 713. He's laughing about his WWII photo on the laptop. Photo taken by Jerry Gilmartin.

"On the first wave, the guys were being shot just coming off the ramp. After our first landing, we backed out to pick up 200 more troops."

With his LCI tied up to a troop transport to take another 200 infantrymen, he could see a burly Navy cook at work in the ship's galley. He was using a knife to carve big juicy slices of meat off a freshly cooked roast. "We'd had nothing but K-rations to eat for the last four days. I must have been drooling," Besse said. "He looked at me and said, 'Y'all want a roast beef sandwich?' And he made roast beef sandwiches for everyone on my crew." Besse recalls that sandwich as the best meal he has ever had.

"Ten or 15 years ago, I got an email from a guy in France," Besse recalled. "He said, 'I want to thank you for saving my family, thank you Steve for what you did,' and that's what makes it all worthwhile."

The Brown Water Gator Navy in Vietnam

By Jeff Veesenmeyer



Troop transport aboard a PCF 'Swift' Mk-I Patrol Craft-Fast on a river in Vietnam.

Swift boats got their nick name from the two turbocharged Detroit marine diesels rated at 480 horsepower with two counter-rotating 28 inch bronze screws. Their designed maximum speed was 32 knots. Their crews gave it full throttle whenever possible.

The Brown Water Navy consisted of four types of heavily armed small craft. Besides Swift Boats the river fleet included high-powered skimmers for ferrying Navy

SEALs, fiberglass river patrol boats capable of navigating in a few inches of muddy water, and Tango Boats – shallow draft armored landing craft that could carry entire infantry units into battle.

Vietnam had no roads. Travel was on foot or on the massive tangle of rivers, canals and waterways that had provided their transportation for centuries. A map of Vietnam waterways looks like a platter of spilled spaghetti. There are over 20,000

miles of navigable inland waterways in Vietnam. Three-thousand of those miles are in the Mekong Delta where Swift Boats conducted most their patrols. Plus, the South Vietnam coastline is 1,200 miles long. Shipping on water was the best way North Vietnam could supply their Viet Cong guerillas in the South. Stopping those supplies became the primary mission of the US Navy.

By 1965 the Navy had developed a successful blockade along the coast of Vietnam. Destroyers and Coast Guard cutters were able to stop cargo ships and fishing trawlers carrying tons of weapons and supplies. When ocean shipping became futile, North Vietnam reverted to their fleet of 50,000 sampans and junks. The Navy realized there was a need for smaller craft that could hug the coast or go into the rivers, bays and backwaters to stop the flow of little boats carrying big loads of military supplies.

The Swift Boats were developed initially to patrol close-in to the coastline. The first ones arrived in Vietnam in 1965. They were a modified design of boats produced by a New Orleans shipbuilder. These boats were used for transport to offshore oil rigs. The Navy only needed to add guns, radar, crew quarters and a ship's bell to make them into Swift boats. The bell was the first thing to go as modifications continued in Vietnam. A clanging bell reduced their stealth ability dramatically. Although the roar of two diesels would have easily drowned out the bell. This was just the first Navy tradition and regulation that went overboard on the Swift Boats.

As the North Vietnamese moved into the inland waterways for shipping, so did the

Swift boats. Eventually their primary mission expanded of stop, board, search and seize any boat with military supplies. They attacked river bases and inserted military units for special amphibious operations.

The Swifts were the most versatile of the Brown Water Navy. They were big enough (50 feet) to navigate the open ocean but small enough to get in and out of shallow rivers and canals. They packed enough firepower to take on most any fight and were fast enough to outrun anything too big to handle.



Swift Boat on patrol in the Mekong Delta.

They were fitted with a twin .50 caliber heavy machine gun turret on top of the pilot house. A third .50 caliber on the fantail rode on top of an 81 mm heavy mortar. This was their over/under gun. The six-man crew had a menu of small arms that included mounted M-60 machine guns, M-16 rifles, .45 caliber pistols, shotguns, bazookas, grenade launchers and grenades. Crews added all types and styles of guns, knives and weaponry that they confiscated. One officer carried a Thompson sub-machine gun as his personal weapon. Most became proficient at loading and firing up to 30 different types of weapons.

The crew of six had an Officer-In-Charge (OinC) not a ship's captain. Most skippers were Lieutenants...some were Ensigns. This was an opportunity for junior officers to get leadership points. They also escaped the spit and polish regulations of the blue water Navy.

The enlisted were Petty Officers. They included an engineerman, radarman, gunnersmate, quartermaster and boatswain. Many volunteered to get away from the BS associated with the real Navy. Uniform of the day was anything from cut-off dungarees to Army fatigues. There was no saluting, no rank insignias on uniforms or an officer's country. They grew beards, chewed tobacco, drank beer on board, kept mascot pets and fished with hand grenades. Underwear only encouraged rashes, so nobody wore any. But they kept their boats spotless – the Navy way – and maintained strict military protocol during patrol operations. Their lives depended on it.

“Saddle up – Let's make war!”

The young crews felt like they were Lords of the jungle. They drove fast, made lots of noise and had enough firepower to tear down trees. They were a river gang fighting the VC gang over turf. LTJG Guy Gugliotta the OinC of *PCF 50* remembers what they would shout before beginning each patrol. “Saddle up, let's make war.” For a 23-year old college grad with a degree in English, Vietnam leeches away his youth and former lifestyle very quickly.

Swifts operated with two crews to keep the boats on patrol. Initially they all operated

from land support bases. As more Swift Boats arrived (116 by 1970) many operated from LST “mother” ships. There were about 10 boats in each base. The constant threat of ambush in the narrow waterways made it necessary to include two or more PCFs on most missions.



The inland rivers and canals were narrow and densely bordered with jungle. Most ambushes came from an enemy that couldn't be seen.

LTJG John Yeoman became a Swift Boat OinC during his second tour in Vietnam. He'd been a first lieutenant, minesweeping and weapons officer on the *USS Gallant* MSO 489 on his first tour. The *Gallant* had patrolled the South China Sea off the DMZ in search of infiltrating junks and trawlers from North Vietnam. During his 10-month tour commanding Swift Boats on *PFC 37* and *692* he led 150 combat patrols. Yeoman was ambushed 10 times. He raided the enemy 18 times in return. He was awarded the Bronze Star three times by the US Navy and the Cross of Gallantry by South Vietnam.

On 16 May 1970 both Gugliotta and Yeoman were on a patrol to insert US Navy SEALs and their Vietnamese Kit Carson Scouts in an enemy controlled area on the Ca Mau Peninsula. The three-boat group

was led by Gugliotta's *PCF 50*. The middle boat was *PCF 64* skippered by LTJG Rick Kine. Yeoman's *PCF 692* brought up the rear of the patrol.

They were navigating eastward on a small narrow river, the Son Dam Doi. The boats were traveling at about 10-knots and had gotten about halfway to the insertion point when all Hell broke loose. They had just gone through an S-curve and into a straight channel. All three boats came under heavy automatic weapons fire and rocket attack from the north bank.

The lead boat, *PFC 50* was hit by a large homemade launch bomb. It blew a five-foot hole in the boat's thin portside hull at the waterline. The explosive was powerful but contained no metal, so nobody was wounded. No crewmembers were down below. They never went below deck for more than 15 seconds while on patrol. The quarter inch aluminum hull couldn't stop a pea shooter let alone rockets, claymore mines or even small arms. With all the munitions in stowage it was a death trap.

PFC 64 was hit by a B-40 rocket on the fantail. Yeoman, bringing up the rear, watched in horror as the mortar mount was blown away and shrapnel created carnage among the Kit Carson Scouts. Shrapnel ignited purple smoke grenades on a Navy Seal's belt. Electrical cables were severed resulting in the loss of communications for the *64* boat.

PFC 50's windshield was shattered and engulfed in smoke. Gugliotta couldn't see. He grabbed the radio and requested which way to turn. There was an open field on the north bank with a tree line blocking the

ambush site. Yeoman thought it was more defensible than the south bank where they'd be open targets. He directed Gugliotta to the field. The engineerman rushed up Gugliotta and said, "We're hit real bad, drive it all the way up on the beach." All guns were blazing at the jungle landing beach to clear the way of any bad guys. *PFC 64* beached next to *50* while the *692* stayed in the killing zone and provided cover fire.

They needed help. Yeoman called in helicopter gunships to strafe the jungle around them and MEDIVAC helicopters to transport wounded and dead. Sailors in the .50 caliber gun turrets reloaded and shot up the brush and trees to clear a landing zone. Then Yeoman called in two carrier-based jets to make strafing runs in front of the boats. "Get as close as possible," he told them. When rockets and 500-pound bombs shook the boats, everyone hit the deck.

MEDIVAC helicopters landed 15 yards away. They hauled wounded and dead through knee deep mud and got them airborne. Boats *692* and *64* went back to Sea Float base. A Riverine Assault Group boat showed up to take care of *PFC 50*. The crew dismantled weapons and loaded all equipment, ammo and supplies on to the Mike Boat for a ride back to Sea Float base.



Riverine Assault Group boat.

The next day a salvage crew returned, patched the hole and towed the 50 back for repairs. It was returned to service by 12 November 1970.

An ironic footnote to this failed operation is that it had happened before. The *PCF 50*, with a different crew leading a three-boat patrol had been ambushed in the same spot just six months prior. Ambushes in the Mekong Delta were to be expected.



PCF 48 returning to base after an ambush at Dung Island.



Troop insertion along a muddy riverbank.

In December of 1970, all the remaining Swift Boats in Vietnam were turned over to the South Vietnamese. In all, 116 Swift Boats patrolled the waterways of South Vietnam from 1965 to 1970. About 600 junior officers and 3,000 enlisted served on them during those five years. Fifty Swift Boat sailors died in Vietnam and 400 others were wounded.



Loading Peoples Self Defense Forces on a Swift Boat after a special operation.

A few stateside Swift Boats survived as trainers and later as museum pieces. Not much more was heard of Swift Boats or their sailors until 2004 when John Kerry ran for president. He was a former Swift Boat skipper.

In 2010 Jon Yeoman was contacted to help save a Swift Boat that had become part of Malta's coastal defense force. Funds were needed to acquire, transport, and restore the PCF 816. After a successful fund-raising effort (more than \$120,000 was raised) the 816 became part of the Maritime Museum's fleet in San Diego. It is currently used to give harbor tours.

In 2013 Yeoman suggested producing a book that described the PCF 816 project and included stories from Swift Boat sailors. It

would be sold in the Maritime Museum's gift shop. Yeoman asked Guy Gugliotta to help with the editing. The book was titled *Restoration of a Legacy*. It sold well enough to consider an expanded version. The subsequent book *Swift Boats at War in Vietnam* would include a historical narrative describing the Navy's role in Vietnam and the need to find a boat that could patrol coastal and inland waterways. It includes first-hand accounts from 38 sailors who served aboard Swift Boats. It published in May of 2017 and is available on Amazon.com.

“Some young men grew up on Swift Boats”

John Yeoman presented the Swift Boat story at a recent Chicago Area Bull Session for the Tin Can Sailor Association. He described the legacy of the Swift Boat veterans like this:

“For those who served aboard them, the boats offered unmatched lessons in heroism, teamwork, camaraderie and the ability to function under life-or-death pressure. Some young men grew up on Swift Boats. Others grew old before their time. Some saw things that amazed and awed them. All saw things they never forgot. Swift Boats gave kids barely out of high school or college the opportunities for leadership and initiative they never could have found elsewhere.”

The same could be said for the LCI sailors who provided amphibious military support 20-plus years before the Vietnam War.



A Riverine Group in armored landing craft approach a marshy landing site with infantry. Looks similar to LCIs going into a beach.

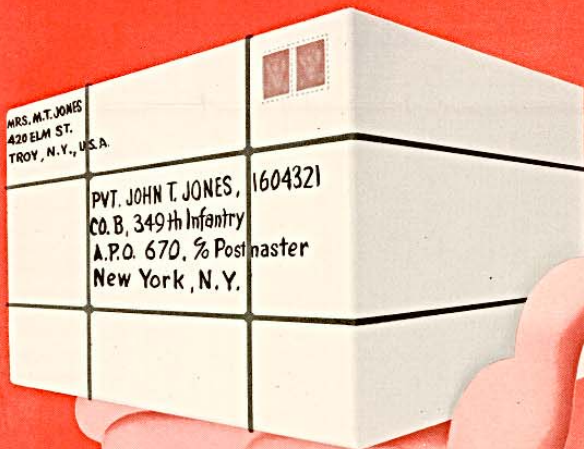


An armored Riverine boat inserting troops into dense jungle.



John Yeoman, former Swift Boat skipper and author, speaks to a group of Tin Can Sailor members at the Chicago Bull Session in October 2019.

Christmas Overseas Gifts



GRAVES

- ★ WRAP SECURELY
- ★ ADDRESS CORRECTLY
- ★ CHOOSE GIFTS WISELY

Mail between Sept. 15-Oct. 15

Christmas cards may be sent any time



U. S. ARMY AND NAVY POSTAL SERVICES



Bevilacqua shares D-Day experiences aboard LCI(L) 93

Waiting her turn to approach Omaha Beach was Coast Guard ship *LCI(L) 93* of Flotilla Ten.

At 0945 hours, she plowed through obstacles of the Easy Red Sector and dropped her ramps. Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division scrambled down the ramps in a hail of small arms fire. Several were hit and fell from their wounds. Once all soldiers had disembarked, crewmembers went down the ramps and carried wounded men back up to safety. Then Lt. (jg) Bornhoft gave the order to retract from the beach. They would be going back for another load of troops.

When they arrived at the troopship *Samuel B. Chase* APA-26 they picked up a double load of soldiers. There would be standing room only. Among the members of the 453rd Amphibious Truck Company was Feliciano “Felix” Bevilacqua. The 453rd had come aboard the day before. Bevilacqua remembers being directed down to the mess hall for steak, salad and milk. He was told, “Make it a good meal, it’s your last.”

Once on board *LCI(L) 93* an officer ordered him to below deck. Felix protested, “I’ll get seasick.” They were miles out into channel. The flat bottomed LCI was tossing and turning in the heavy surf. The officer said, “Okay, go up on the bow next to him.” There was a crew member on the bow manning the 20 mm gun. As the *LCI(L) 93* approached Normandy, Felix had a ring-side seat of what was unfolding on Omaha Beach. It was mayhem. The shoreline was littered with burning, damaged and sinking

landing craft. Enemy gun emplacements had survived the earlier bombardment. Troops on shore had nothing capable of taking out the defensive positions.

Five Destroyers were ordered in close to shore to provide support. They lined up bow to stern within 1000 yards from the beach and delivered rapid fire broadsides on German fortifications. *LCI(L) 93* was held back during the bombardment. Bevilacqua and everyone with a view watched the fireworks while tin cans took out targets. An Army engineer assured Seaman 1st Class McCrory that according to plan, the beach would be under control by the time they landed. McCrory’s response was, “Nothing is going according to plan.”

This was the real deal for Felix Bevilacqua. For months the 453rd had trained for this moment. Each time they boarded a ship he didn’t know if this was the invasion or another training exercise. In fact, when they boarded *Samuel B. Chase* just days ago, no one told them where they were going. Now Felix had to be thinking about how he traveled full circle from Europe and back. He’d been born October 21, 1921 in Italy. He immigrated to America in 1937 to live with his father in Girard, Ohio. He was drafted into the Army when the war broke out even though he wasn’t an American citizen.

When the *LCI 93* went in this time mortar and artillery shells were raining down. The LCI began taking hits. It was critical to unload 453rd before any shells made a direct hit. Ramps were lowered and men raced down into the surf. Bevilacqua remembers stepping off into water ten feet deep. His Mae West didn’t work. He couldn’t swim.

He was loaded down with a full back-pack, rifle and 45 rounds of ammo. He dog-paddled and fought for solid footing until he made it to the beach. He huddled with other men behind anything that provided some cover. Then he recalls a General walking up the beach while waving men forward and yelling at him, “Come on son let’s enjoy this war.” Felix made it to the sea wall. He spent the night in a fox hole with another guy. He talked to him during the night, but he never talked back. Next morning he realized his fox hole buddy was dead.

Bevilacqua survived D-Day. The *LCI(L) 93* did not. It took so many hits it had to be abandoned. Felix Bevilacqua fought across France with General Patton’s Army. He was at the Battle of the Bulge. His company moved the Army across the Rhine in 50 amphibious ducks. They were rewarded by a General with 200 bottles of wine.

Felix became an American citizen, returned to Ohio, got married, raised two daughters, and founded his own fabricating business.

Joe Maiorana – My grandfather, Felix Bevilacqua was aboard *LCI 93* with the 453rd amphibious truck company, on the D-Day Omaha landings. He told stories often of the brave men aboard the ship that got him to the beach. He survived Omaha and the war and lived to be 92 years old, passing away on June 17th 2014. Thank you for providing the detailed account of what happened that day in Elsie Item (The Story of the *LCI(L) 93* and *LCI(L) 487* at Normandy). He rarely went into specific details of the landings, but more often summarized what happened. It was great to read the exact details in this piece. His full story can be found on youtube.com



The LCI 93 had to be abandoned on Omaha Beach. She was badly damaged and had become grounded with a sandbar blocking any hope of escaping back to the Channel.



Felix Bevilacqua was born in Abruzzo, Italy. He moved to Ohio in 1937 to work with his father. When WWII began, he was drafted into the military even though he was not yet an American citizen. He passed away in 2014 at the age of 92.

No Matter What, or Where or When

Poem by Richard Williams LCI(M) 352

No matter the service you served in, back then
No matter how long you were in, where, or
when
No matter your faith, or to what you feel bound,
The magic of Christmas was felt all around.

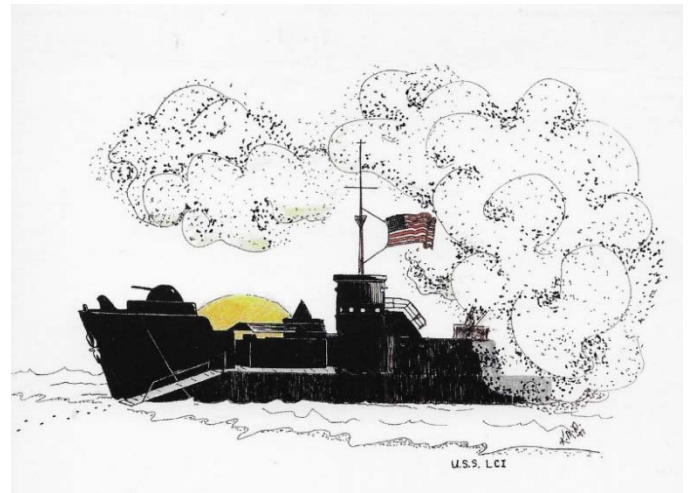
The Army, the Navy, the Air Force, Marines,
The bulwark on which all our Liberty leans,
To safeguard our Freedom, allow us to live
According to choice only freedom can give.

So Christmas becomes an excursion to life,
A means to show love, and to minimize strife,
To give of yourself, be it stranger or friend,
One season, one reason love messages send.

Make certain you recognize this Christmas Day
The symbol and meaning of those in harm's
way,
To them, dedication to duty involves
You knowing the door to our freedom revolves.

*Reprinted with permission by the author. It
published in a 2013 book of Verses by Richard
Williams titled "America – Freedom, Veterans,
and YOU."*

About the Author: Richard Williams was born
in 1926 and raised on Wheeling Island, West
Virginia. At age 17 he enlisted in the Navy he
served in the Pacific Theatre on *LCI(M) 352*.
He suffered nerve deafness in WWII and is
now legally blind due to macular degeneration.
He serves as the unofficial poet laureate for
Honor Flight Chicago.



LCI Poetry from WWII

Most of us will remember Jim McCarthy,
LCI(G) 685 as a California State Director and a
long-time member of the LCI Association
Board of Directors. He was a great writer with
a great sense of humor. And it turns out that his
Father was a writer too.

His Father, T. McCarthy sent this poem to Jim
when he was in WWII in the Pacific. Jim had
saved this verse and printed it with the hand
drawn picture of the LCI above.

If I can hold the torch to light the way,

Mid trials and reverses in life's strife:

If I can add some sunshine to the day

or help to lead a fuller, truer life

If I can guide the faltering steps along

the paths of time when skies above are dim

If I can bring some beauty to your song

Or say some word that keeps you nearer Him

Who comforts all our ills or smoothes the pain

I feel I shall not have lived in vain.

T. McCarthy

Submitted by Joe Flynn

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, 2019 and 2018. During these years, the expenses of the Association to publish the Elsie Item Magazine, maintain the USSLCI.org website and the the expenses for administration averaged \$1,103 per month during the current year and \$560 per month in the prior year. During 2018 the Association Executive Board retained the services of Jeff Veesenmeyer to manage the publication of the ELSIE ITEM newsletter after Joe Flynn, California Director, needed to relinquish that duty. This action accounts for substantially all of the increase in expenditures.

As expected there has been a natural decline in the number of WWII veteran members and fewer new members. This has led to a related decrease in receipts of dues. Fortunately, continued Cash Donations by our members has allowed the LCI Association to maintain financial viability over these last 2 years. Thank you to all for your Generous Support!

Robert E Wright Jr., Treasurer

USS LCI National Association Inc Statement of Financial Position

	Current Year End May 31, 2019	Prior Year End May 31, 2018
ASSETS		
Cash and Checking	30,124.08	31,119.03
TOTAL ASSETS	30,124.08	31,119.03
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Total Liabilities	5.00	5.00
Equity		
Opening Equity Balance 06/01/2006	90,564.45	90,564.45
Reduction of Net Assets 2007 to 2016	-81,686.17	-81,686.17
Post 2016 Addition to Net Assets	21,240.80	22,235.75
Total Equity	30,119.08	31,114.03
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	30,124.08	31,119.03

USS LCI National Association Inc Statement of Activities

	Jun 1 2018 - May 31 2019	Jun 1 2017 - May 31 2018
Support, Gains and Revenue		
Direct Public Support (Donations)	5,300.00	5,127.07
Membership Dues	6,785.00	7,845.00
Net Product Revenue	272.15	252.85
Total Support, Gains and Revenue	12,357.15	13,224.92
Expenditures		
Organization Operating Expenditures	268.02	442.11
Elsie Publication	11,918.77	5,888.10
Website Operations	689.44	0.00
Annual Reunion Expenditures	355.87	388.32
Total Organization Operating Expenditures	13,232.10	6,718.53
Contributions to Other Organizations	120.00	0.00
Total Expenditures	13,252.10	6,831.83
Total Addition to Net Assets	-994.95	6,393.09

LCIer ABE LAURENZO GRAND MARSHALL

A Veteran's Day Parade was held in Portland Oregon. The Pacific North West weather was brisk with an east wind. It began at 0930 and lasted until the 11th hour of 11 November 2019. Abe Laurenzo was one of three D-Day landing veterans who were the Grand Marshalls.



Abe and Wife Ester, dressing for the Weather

The parade which was well organized and attended featured 1700 participants. The celebration started and ended by prayer.



Pre Parade WWII Era Limousine Service

Abe was chauffeured to a tire store, where he was then golf carted to the starting point, 9 blocks distant. Abe's wife, Esther, was escorted separately 2 blocks away to the Ross Hollywood Chapel. Inside there was reserved seating, breakfast, as well as a vintage uniform display. Rich and Marilyn Lovell joined two of Abe and Esther's children and viewed the

procession. Abe arrived in a white Corvette and joined his family at the end of the parade.



Changing with the Times - Parading in a Corvette

Reserved stage seats with Mayor and other dignitaries were readied for the flag ceremony with Grant High School playing the Star Spangled Banner and then a medley of Armed Forces departmental songs. America the Beautiful was played by The Beat Goes On senior band. Taps was played, even though Veteran's Day is about the living.

Barbara Jensen of the Oregon Spirit of 45 spoke about remembering the Greatest Generation.



Abe Representing the "Greatest Generation"

LCI Assn. 2020 Membership Renewals

If you are member of the USS Landing Craft Infantry National Association Assoc. and received this edition of the ELSIE ITEM in the mail, you should have also received your notice to renew your membership, which was mailed to you in a separate mailing during November. Please return your renewal as soon as possible.

LCI Assn. 2020 Reunion Information all LCI Veterans please read this

Our Association, because of its long history of involvement with the National World War II Museum in New Orleans LA., has the honor of being invited to be part of the Ceremonies that will commemorate the Anniversary of the Ending of World War II. The WWII museum, would like to have as many World War II veterans present as is possible of course, and the USS LCI National Association represents one of the few remaining active WWII veterans organizations. The Museums ceremonies will take place on September 2, 2020. The details of the official events are still being determined but they are planning to go on for the entire day. The USS LCI National Association reunion activities would take place either prior or following the September 2 ceremonies.

If there is a possibility that you can attend this special event, please complete and return this form. I will provide you updates on the event, as I receive them.

LCI Veteran Name: _____ Rating: _____

Served aboard: USS LCI TYPE:(_____) SHIP NUMBER: _____

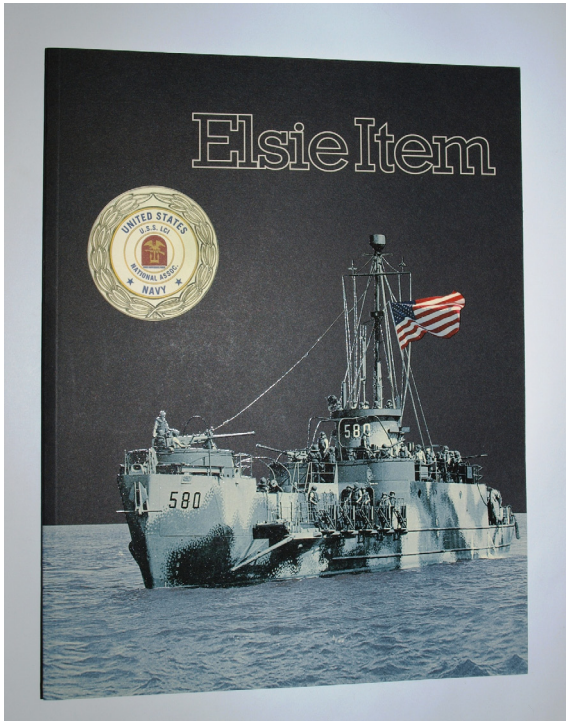
Number of Additional Family Members Possibly Attending _____

Contact: Name: _____

Contact: Phone Number _____ Email _____

**Return to: USS LCI National Assn. Robert E Wright, President
PO BOX 407
Howell, MI 48844-0407**

This will be a once in a lifetime opportunity for all our WWII Veterans to be publicly honored and thanked for their service by their fellow Americans.



ELSIE ITEM 70 The March 2010 issue was a special printing of selected stories that were taken for the previous issues of the ELSIE ITEM # 1 to # 69. All the stories are firsthand accounts from both officers and enlisted men who had seen the war, up close and personal, from the decks of these small ships. Many stories relate humorous events while others cover the reality of being at war. This is for any members who don't have all of the issues going back 25 years, and will be a great way to complete your collection of LCI History. It would also be a unique gift to anyone interested in the history of the LCI in WWII.

The \$20 price includes US Postal Service First Class Mail

ELSIE 70 \$20 each Quantity _____ Amount: \$ _____

Name _____ USS LCI (____) _____

Phone Number _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail Address _____

Make your Check Payable to the USS LCI National Association

Mail it with your order form to:

**USS LCI National Assn.
Robert E Wright, Treasurer
PO Box 407
Howell, MI 48844-0407**

Officers and Executive Board

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!

Officers

Robert E. Wright, Jr.

President/Treasurer
Son of Robert E. Wright, WWII,
USS LCI(L) 20, USS LCI(L) 996
& USS LCI (L) 997
P.O. Box 407
Howell, MI 48844
(517) 548-2326
rewrightcpa@gmail.com

Richard Lovell

Vice President
LCI 713 Restoration Project
Amphibious Forces Memorial
Museum
8014 NE 159TH Ave
Vancouver, WA 98682-1539
(360) 952-8916 (h)
(971) 570-7231 (c)

Peter Selan

Secretary
Nephew of Leo Peter Selan, (KIA)
WWII, LCI(G) 561 & LCI (G) 475
875 Moores Mountain Road
Lewisberry, PA 17339
(717) 697-0294

Chaplain

Abe Laurenzo

Chaplain
WW II Veteran, LCI (L) 409
& LCI (L) 47
2610 SE 164th Ave. Unit J16
Vancouver, WA 98683
(360) 718-7994
al Laurenzo@gmail.com

Board of Directors

Joe Flynn

California Director
Brother of LaVerne C. Flynn,
WWII, LCI (G) 347
4603 Collwood Lane
San Diego, CA 92115
(619) 546-7088
joeglo@msn.com

Stan Galik

Son of Stanley Galik
WW II, LCI (L) 35
13006 Crested Ct.
Fredericksburg, VA 22408-0245
(540) 898-3567
lci35@galik.com

Dr. Michael A. Pikos

Son of Anthony M. Pikos,
WWII, LCI (L) 14
1286 Playmoor Dr.
Palm Harbor, FL 34683
(727) 410-0100
mapikos@gmail.com

Lisa Bittle Tancredi

Daughter of Robert D. Bittle
WWII, LCI (L) 944
3605 Woodvalley Drive
Baltimore, MD 21208
(410) 852-3928
ltancredi@gebsmith.com

Directors Emeritus

Rod Scurlock

Vice President Emeritus
WWII Veteran, LCI (G) 565
4445 Mustang Dr.
Boise, Idaho 83709
(208) 362 4447

Gordon Smith

Director Emeritus
WWII Veteran, LCI (L) 43
2313 Northeast 110th Ave.
Vancouver, WA 98684
(360) 256-5901
gordon.sharonsmith@gmail.com

Historians

John M. France

European Theater of Operations
Son of Frank T. France, WWII,
USS LCI (L) 540
11621 Copper Spring Trail
Oro Valley, AZ 85737
(520) 429-3792
lci540@aol.com

Dennis Blocker

Pacific Theater of Operations
Grandson of Clifford Lemke,
WWII, LCI (G) 449
6138 Border Trail
San Antonio, TX 78240
(210) 636-9068
lci449@yahoo.com

Attention LCI Veterans and Associates
We need your stories now. Write or email John France.

C/O Robert E. Wright, Jr. President/Treasurer
P.O. Box 407 Howell, MI 48844-0407



**Merry Christmas to LCI sailors,
their families and friends.**



The crew of USS LCI 44 posed on deck for a Christmas Day photo in 1943. They were anchored in Bizerte, Tunisia. Everyone is in blues except the cooks in aprons. They must have been taking a short break from preparing the holiday feast.