



Deck Log of the USS LCI(L) 713

Official Newsletter of the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum



The Next Generation Crew!

December 2016

“Deck Log of the USS LCI(L) 713”

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Official publication of the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum(AFMM) an Oregon based non-profit charitable organization. Membership is open to anyone interested in supporting our mission. For online memberships or donations, check our website or submit the attached form.

Thanks to our volunteers: J Wandres(our chief writer and editor), Rich Lovell, Gordon Smith and Jerry Gilmartin for their contributions.

Contact AFMM@amphibiousforces.org

Website: www.lci713.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/lci713

	<p>2017 LCI National Association Reunion Announcement Portland Oregon May 14-16, 2017</p>	
<p>The AFMM is sponsoring the Event this year and of course it features the LCI-713. AFMM Members are welcome to join in and spend some time with LCI Veterans. Please contact us for more details.</p>		

Help us Launch the LCI-713!

(Cut Here and return)

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!

Dear Rick: Here is my contribution of \$_____ to help get the LCI-713 underway.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

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

LCI or Ship affiliation _____ Branch/rank _____

Message from the President

Dear Shipmates and Supporters,

Look at photos of LCI-713 on the back of this publication or on our website (www.amphibiousforces.org) or Facebook ([Facebook.com/lci713](https://www.facebook.com/lci713)).

What you see is a squared away amphibious landing craft. Pretty much the way her navy crew kept their ship during World War II.

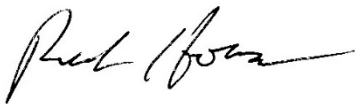
Today, LCI-713's volunteers keep your ship in good shape. Each donates hundreds of hours a year - as welders, machinists, carpenters, painters, historians, writers and fund-raisers.

We could not have accomplished all we have without their service, *and your support*. We need that now more than ever.

AFMM is under two deadlines to complete the restoration of LCI-713. First: we may need to find a new moorage in the next two years. Second: We have stabilized the hull, but this fix is not permanent. We must re-plate the hull if the ship is to remain seaworthy. AFMM has the steel plate to do the job. We have the engines to power the ship. What we do *not have* is the money to get the job done. Estimates range from \$300,000 to about \$900,000, Yes - *that* much. Our goal for 2017 is to acquire a barge to hoist the LCI-713 upon while repairs are being performed. This will help push the cost to the lower end of the scale.

Can we count on your support to help launch the LCI?

Thank you,



Rick Holmes, AFMM President

AFMM and LCI National Alliance

The AFMM is now officially in an Alliance with the LCI National Association. We will be cooperating on our areas of common interest, such as preservation of historical documentation and artifacts such as our favorite, The LCI-713. The AFMM will help in hosting LCI reunions. We will present more details as they evolve. Interested in the LCI National Association? Website: www.usslci.com

LCI 713 Restoration Update

Greetings LCI Shipmates!

Another year has come to an end aboard the museum ship USS LCI713. The ship and her dedicated crew of volunteers has been a beehive of activities, reaching levels seldom seen in the past. Here is a short review of these noteworthy accomplishments. As you read them, you get a feeling of the dedication that these volunteers have for the 72 year old combat veteran vessel.

LCI Galley Museum Display

We decided it was time to make the LCI713 galley a museum worthy “display space” to recreate the look and feel of the compartment as it was during WWII. This required that we remove all of the modern appliances and items used in everyday food preparation to another area that would not detract from the WWII era galley. We found a convenient spot to move the working galley right under our noses! We simply utilized the walk-in refrigerator space (complete with a door obtained from LCS-51 up in Everett back in 2002) as the newly disguised ‘cook shack’. This enabled us to have a working food prep area without detracting from the museum style displays. If you close the door to the walk-in refrigerator, you would never know it was actually a complete kitchen! Rich Lovell busied himself in searching for items to display inside the historic galley. He found plastic replica fruit and vegetables and even bread and meat. He also found realistic looking labels for the various cans of food they would possibly have had on hand. We are working off of photographs obtained from the LCI Historic Collection (courtesy of Dennis Blocker) to recreate the exact arrangement of this most important space on any ship.



The Galley!



Our food prep area hidden in the refrigerator.



Galley Stores

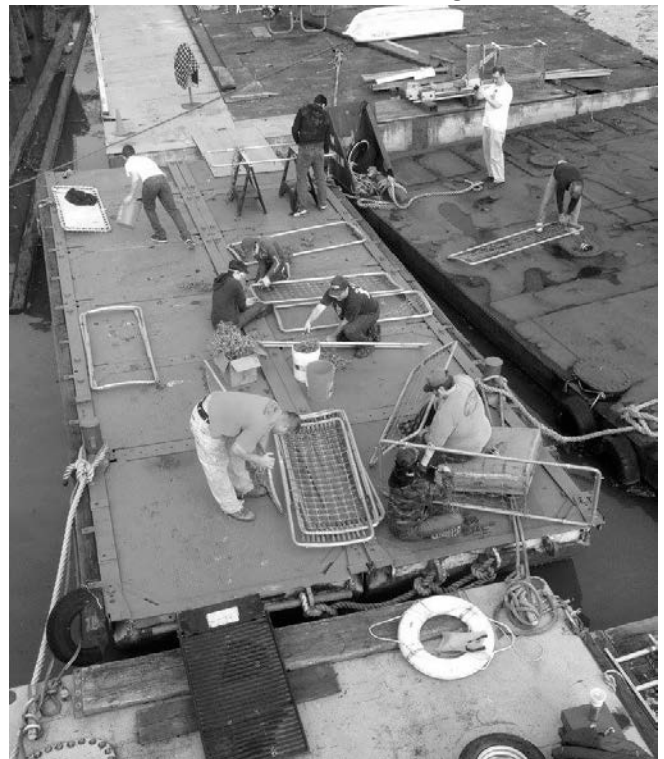
We have a couple of photos posted on the bulkheads showing LCI crewmen gathered inside their galley and we have re-created the space in the spirit of those photos to every detail.

Eagle Scouts and Sea Cadets!

We have been extremely fortunate to be the beneficiary of no less than two Eagle Scout Projects and 1 Sea Cadet workday on the LCI713. This is in addition to the Eagle project last year by Johnathon “JP” Powell.



Parker Drew and Company



Stringing Bunks



Andrew Crane and Company

April: Rich installed a galley pothook, Jerry fabricated a salt and pepper holder box. Rich installed historically correct shelving inside the galley and Mark, Rick, and Jerry Corosealed the dry stores locker. The Portland Sea Cadets brought 30 volunteers to paint the dry stores locker, paint the officers head, do fancy knot work on the handrails for troop 2 berthing, and recoat the spud locker with more shellac.

March: Larry and Elizabeth Baumann refurbished the sick bay folding chairs and Woody repainted color labels on the flag bag. The crew emptied the engine room for the upcoming paint job and helped prepare the ship for Eagle project day. Parker Drew’s Eagle Scout service project had 36 volunteers: they painted the engine room, did knot-work on the engine room and bridge ladder handrails, and completed overhand grafting fancy work on crew’s mess stanchion. Parker’s crew also converted 25 more troop berthing bunks from springs to canvas.



The Naval Sea Cadets

Mark Stevens installed shower plumbing piping inside the officer's head and John, Phil and Mark painted the plywood decking on the access barge. Rich created displays for food cans, bake ware, and mess ware. On top of that, the AFMM hosted the LCI Northwest Veterans Reunion, organized by Rick and Gordon.



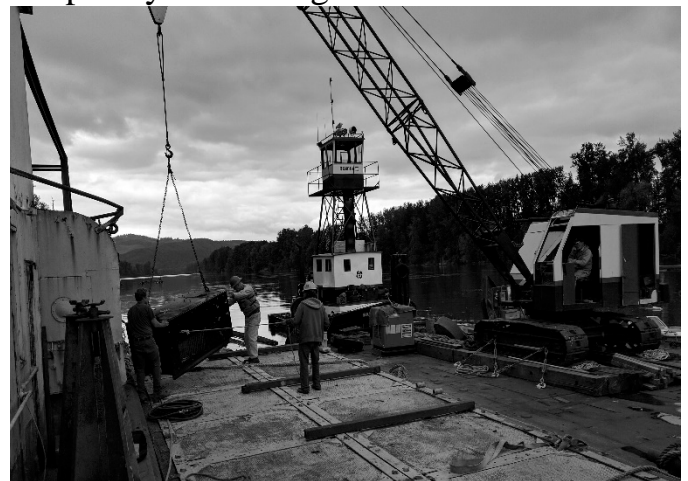
NW LCI Reunion



At the reunion, Phil Reed was awarded model of LCI-35 in recognition of his Outstanding Support.

June: Mark Stevens and Phil Richart sealed pinholes in deck of landing vestibule just aft of the bridge with welds and fiberglass repair. Mark and Jerry also welded a leaky pinhole in steel deck beneath base of Novo winch that had leaked into the troop 2 museum space every time it rained.

July: The crew helped move our 1000 pound anchor from the bow to its stern stanchion. Rich refurbished a rusted hand anchor winch. Mark and Rich installed a galley fire bucket holder and hot water tank straps. The crew started on preparation for installing foam; such as loading 8 - 500 pound 55 gallon drums onto the ship and stowing them below decks. Also the crew loaded an industrial air compressor, jobsite electrical diesel generator and 3 phase electrical transformer with load center aboard the ship. All equipment was for temporary use during the foam installation.



Loading up Equipment

Aug: The crew made more preparations for foaming by removing all bunks and lockers from crews berthing and removing or relocating equipment inside the troop 3 compartment to make room for the foam equipment. Two access holes were cut in the steel deck of crew's berthing to enable the foam installation. Finally, we installed foam into the double bottom tanks of troop 3 berthing and crews quarters. This was a 72 hour continuous effort, with manning required from start to finish.

Sept: Andrew Crane's Eagle Scout service project, with 45 volunteers, made custom grommeted and laced canvas covers for the stern winch, did knot-work on troop 2 handrails, and painted the ammo magazine.

All compartments on the entire ship have now been painted. Mark Stevens and Phil Richart used a industrial sewing machine to back up all hems of the grommated panels for the stern anchor winch cover.



Andrew Crane's Scout group making the tarps.

Oct: Bubba and Mark repair welded the square openings in the crew berthing deck that were cut to allow foaming installation. Jerry applied Coro-seal then finished painting bilges of the ammo magazine. Mark and Phil fabricated and welded in new steel battens and stanchions per manufacturer's blueprints in the ammo magazine. Woody fabricated and John Ragno painted and installed a new ammunition magazine sprinkler manifold. Jerry, J Wandres and Rich Lovell removed the old deck plates in dry stores and cleaned out years of mud and rust from the bilge.



The final touches of paint in the Magazine!

Nov: Rich, John and Jerry Coro-sealed then painted the bilge of dry stores. Rich and Jerry painted, then installed a replica steel galley range vent hood, including cutting clearance hole for a fan and bracket. Then they installed its light fixture.



Jerry and Rich finishing the range hood

Jerry relocated the vent fan switch and power cord to historically accurate positions. Rich also repaired a leaking galley sink water pipe and Mark and Rick fabricated and welded in a new rain gutter diverter over the aft hatch. John Gillon began fabrication work on one of two replica steel Webb Perfection diesel stoves. Also John and Chris installed a new 55 gallon flotation drum beneath the access floating dock to replace lost flotation.



Galley Stoves on the way..

This list is by no means complete, but it gives you an idea of the myriad of tasks that the small but energetic volunteer crew gets accomplished on any given Saturday! After all, they are not making any more LCIs and we have to take care of the one we've got! Gordon Smith once told me that this LCI713 with all of her equipment installed and restored to the way she looked the day she was built, is much nicer than was his own LCI-43. He says the LCI-713 by comparison is "the Cadillac of LCIs" and he wishes he had it as good as we do now. When I look at the LCI713 today, it is hard for me to imagine this being a Cadillac, but I believe what Gordon tells me! I was talking to Rich Lovell the other day and we were remarking that this is the best the LCI713 has ever

looked in our memory, inside or out, and I started volunteering on the LCI-713 in 2002! It sure has come a long way from the derelict bucket of rust that it once was! It is a unique opportunity to be involved in restoring such a rare artifact still surviving from WWII. It is also pretty amazing to see the look on peoples face when they see just how small these ships actually were. This is something we are bound to protect and save for future generations and one can feel truly honored by helping preserve her in any way one can.

Thanks,
Jerry Gilmartin
LCI713 Restoration Crewman

Some Comments By Gordon

Jerry, You seem concerned that the #43 and the #713 were so different.

Anything you could say about a square con of the first flotillas and a round con in comparison would be an understatement.

It is hard for you volunteers [or anyone else] to comprehend what the LCI #43, Flotilla One and the other LCIs in Flotilla One and Two were like.

We lived on canned food. Army C rations and K rations were a treat and a change of diet. Powdered eggs, powdered potatoes and a ton of canned figs! Yes, there was the famous spam. For two years, we washed our clothes in cold salt water in a bucket.

We had but one sink, one mirror and one shower [again, cold salt water] for the entire crew. The head or toilet was a trough next to the sink with water running through it from the fire main. There were four boards properly spaced so that two could sit on the head at the same time. It was good that our beards were young and soft. Try, now, to shave in cold salt water.

When it rained, we would go out on deck and get a good shower! ! ! !

We had no walk-in cooler. The entire crew had just one table, three-sided table [as it was against a bulkhead] in crew's quarters down below. This one three sided table in the small cramped crew's quarters was for the whole crew to eat on, write letters, play checkers or what have you. There was a freezer underneath the table that never worked!

Our LCI was just a step ahead of the British LCIs with benches and constructed for a one way trip to the landing and not meant to live on for two years. It was extremely basic.

There were no books, no music, and no sport equipment of any kind. We did do some swimming and fished with hand grenades for small bony fish that you could not eat.

You can see that in the entire ship there was NO privacy. You looked at the same faces day in and day out.

Believe me, I am not complaining. We were young, we adjusted, and it just became a way of life.

After two years of this and five invasions, we remaining four of the original crew were classed as "battle fatigue". The war was over for us. We became instructors in our ratings. I was supposed to go to the Thirteenth Navy District [Bremerton] and I ended up in Norfolk, Virginia.

Nuff Said,

Smitty

A TOUR PRIOR TO ANCHORAGE

Around Feb 1945, the 713 entered Seeadler Harbor, Manus, Admiralty Islands Fleet Anchorage. The crew, being made up entirely of Naval Reservists who had little to no fleet experience, had never seen so many large combat ships in one place. They convinced the skipper to circle the carriers, battleships and cruisers first for a look see. The Fleet Admiral was on the carrier and noticed this and radioed the Captain of "that little 713 ship" to get in his gig and report for debriefing. When the radio man on the 713 replied to the Admiral that LCIs were not issued a Captains Gig and all they had was a balsa life raft, the Admiral decided to send his Personal "Admirals Barge" from the Carrier to pick up the skipper for his appointment with destiny After he returned, that was THE END OF TOURIST EXCURSIONS.

From crewman Hubert Miller in Sept 2009, visiting his ship.

How to remember a veteran and help LCI-713

AFMM is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization. You may claim your donation as a tax exemption on your federal return. We accept donations of any amount. However, for a donation of \$250, we will honor the person of your choice with a memorial life jacket. The life jacket will have a plaque with the person's name and inscription on it and will be displayed in the crew's quarters. AFMM presently has honored 150 veterans. Help us launch the LCI.

The LCI-713 is unique and worth saving!

Your continuing donation dollars and support are key to our success. Help us preserve the LCI-713 for future generations.

AFMM Seeks a Large Barge



LCI-713 will need a minimum 160x40 foot barge.

The AFMM is looking for a barge large enough to hold LCI-713 for up to a year in order for the hull of the 72-year-old amphibious landing craft to be replaced or re-plated. In addition, AFMM will need a heavy-lift crane that can lift the 250-ton warship out of the water and set it down on the barge, where it will be blocked while undergoing repairs.

The 158-foot-long amphibious landing craft has never been out of water since its launch in September 1944, and the hull is worn thin. AFMM faces the possibility of having to pump foam into bilge tanks to ensure the vessel does not sink at its mooring at Swan Island lagoon, in Portland, OR.

In the spring of 2015 AFMM President, Rick Holmes and board member Dave McKay, Jr. met with officials of Vigor Ship Repair, located at Swan Island. Holmes said AFMM already owned enough 5/16th-inch steel to re-plate the hull. So, how much would it cost for Vigor to do the job? At the high end, if Vigor put LCI-713 into one of its dry docks, the ship could get a new hull in 30 to 60 days. Estimated cost: \$900,000.

Vigor suggested an alternative: AFMM would obtain a barge that measures at least 160 by 40 feet. Then Vigor's heavy-lift cranes could hoist and block the ship on it. The barge could be parked in a low-use area of Vigor's facilities. Work would be done – as time and resources allowed -- by union shipwrights, trainees, even AFMM volunteers. The estimated cost could be as low as \$300,000.

Several marine services companies list equipment for sale or rent, and advertise in the trade publication *Boats & Harbors*. Many of these companies are located on the U.S. East Coast or Gulf Coast. *B & H* has offered to run a feature and an ad about AFMM's needs, hoping a benefactor will come on board to help save the ship.



Vigor Ship repair facility, Swan Island, Portland.
LCI-713 is moored at the top right.

How much do you pay a volunteer?

Well, you don't, because that's what volunteers do: they give. Our guys – and their family members, too -- give hours and hours of their time toward one goal: to help restore and launch LCI (L) 713.

On almost every Saturday – rain or shine -- we gather at Portland's Swan Island lagoon, where the ship is moored. Without too much fuss or fanfare each of us picks up where we left off the previous Saturday. We paint. We weld. We repair. We plan. We count our expenses and tally our contributions.

However, our volunteers don't knock off at 1600 hours. Many continue, at home or office and on weekends; on the phone and on the computer, or in the car on the road, or meeting with community groups and leaders to promote the mission of the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum: to restore and preserve the last known World War II Landing Craft Infantry still afloat and looking as it did when it served during the War in the Pacific.

It takes time. And it takes money. One founding member, Jerry Gilmartin, works for Intel Corporation, a company that rewards volunteer hours with a \$10.00 per hour matching grant. His son, Trae Gilmartin, works for Enterprise Auto Rental Corp who matches his Payroll Deduction through the United Way with a 50% Match contributing That's over \$4,000 between the two this year!. Our historian searches the globe, virtually by computer, for missing parts. A volunteer professional writer produces this newsletter: "*Deck Log of LCI 713.*" From all of us to all of you, we need your support.

Rick Holmes, AFMM President

Blue Skies and Ensign's Gold

By J. Wandres,
Director, AFMM Public Affairs.

It's not uncommon for we who live in the Pacific "Northwest" to pray for blue skies. When Mandie Alexander did it this February, it worked. On the last Saturday, blue shone through the gray, in time for husband, Kristoffer Scott Alexander, to be sworn in as an Ensign in the United States Navy in a ceremony on board LCI-713.

Kris Alexander gave an oath to uphold the constitution of the United States, and to serve as a Navy Chaplain. For the age 31 native of Vancouver, Washington, it was not the beginning of a career, but a step in a journey begun when he was 16.

His dad had died following a car accident. Over the next six months Kris would lose five friends to disease and a drunk driver. When Kris enlisted in the Marine Corps, he knew "The Lord prepared me to 'handle' death."

Getting a Handle

How does anyone "handle" death – from any cause – and be able to help others work through their grieving? In Alexander's words: "I have seen death [and] faced suffering head on -- and was willing to speak about it." In the past ten years he served a variety of ministries at the Crossroads Community Church and Hope Church, and children's pastor and pastor of student ministries.

Even as an active duty Marine Kris knew he wanted to become a chaplain. "I wanted to get dirty and walk with the men." With the 6th Engineer Support Battalion (PDX), Alexander deployed to Iraq and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. As radio operator for the commanding officer, Alexander saw the stress on his fellow service members.



From left to right: Kristoffer Alexander, Prof Ray Andrews, SGM Ness Aguilar, USMC (Ret) The Lieutenant is not identified

Alexander: a "go-to" Guy

Forty family members, friends and former marines assembled for the commissioning ceremony on board the World War II amphibious landing vessel.

Ness Aguilar, a retired Marine Sergeant-Major, recalled Alexander in Iraq: "When Kris told me he wanted to be a Chaplain, I thought, Oh. *Really?* Some guys in the unit went around with an expletive-deleted *attitude*. Kris' attitude never changed: he was there for the men. He was the go-to guy for any marine that needed help."

Retired Lt. Col. Jon Hill, former commanding officer of the 6th E.S.B., spoke about the important role of a Chaplain to the emotional health of the men. "In the military the Chaplain often is the only place where a marine can feel 'at home.' It takes someone who has been in the trenches to know this. Kris has been in the trenches."

"... a fine teacher"

Alexander serves in the IRR, the Individual Ready Reserve. He'll attend

the Navy's Direct Commission Officer Indoctrination Course in Newport, Rhode Island. The course, mentally and physically demanding, introduces the new officer "to the structure of the Navy and its rich history of traditions and customs."

Kris Alexander grew up in Vancouver and graduated from Skyview High School. He earned an associates degree from Clark Community College, then a B.A. degree from Multnomah University. Professor Roy Andrews said about Alexander: "I got to know Kris [and] knew he would make a fine *teacher*...[and] could lead people through love."

A brisk northerly breeze had cleared the clouds; the sky was blue. Kris's wife, Mandie, spoke: "During the eight years Kris was in the military the road to being a chaplain was not easy, but Kris has flourished, as well as being a wonderful husband and father." The Alexanders have two children, Malachi, 4; McKenzie, 1, and have been foster parents to several children.

Steve Besse Does Not Like Fireworks

LCI-713 doesn't get a lot of "fan" mail, but we received a letter from Steve Besse of Corvallis, Oregon in response to a request from AFMM President Rick Holmes for "war stories."

Dear Rick,

I was executive officer aboard LCI 420. We had sailed from Plymouth, England with 200 soldiers and made our initial landing and unloaded the troops on Omaha Beach the morning of June 6th. We were fortunate to come through without too much damage and then sailed out about 10 miles to troop transports, and brought back another load of troops to Omaha. We went back and forth all day long. As I recall, we made 9 or 10 beachings.

That night our ship, LCI 420, and another LCI were given some special orders. Two tugboats in the area off of Normandy Beach had hit mines and were sunk. Our new orders were to tie up to a large barge that had 1,000 tons of open ammunition on board, and beach it. We were given specific orders as to which beach to hit. We succeeded in tying up to the barge and then slowly pulled the barge between our two ships toward the beach. There was horrendous fire with tracers and shells lighting up the sky like monstrous fireworks. We succeeded in getting the barge onto the beach and did not take time to unbend the lines – we cut them with an ax. The Lord was with us as we sailed back to the transport to load troops. Fireworks have held no thrill for me since; in fact, I hate them. That's the story for what it's worth.

Cooking with Gas? Not yet, shipmates

Some visitors to LCI-713 are in awe of the fresh vegetables and fruits they see in the galley; that is, until they try to bite into a "strawberry" and find it's a piece of molded, colored plastic. A chicken waiting to be fried? Yep: real rubber. In fact, the galley has no stove on which to prepare meals. There is a good reason for that.

We have official U.S. Navy photographs and blueprints that show what the stove *looks* like. However, we have not been able to find a Webpperfection Model 120 diesel-fueled cook stove available, anywhere!

The company that made the cook stoves under a government contract has none and doesn't know if any exist. We found a Model 120 on board a restored oil tanker berthed in Brooklyn, New York. It belongs to the Portside Maritime Museum and their ship, the *Mary A. Whalen*. J Wandres sent his son over to the ship to get photos and measurements and he came through with the goods: enough info to create drawings and a replica model.

That's not like buying plastic fruit and a rubber chicken. AFMM contacted several companies that design and fabricate displays for commercial and industrial events. One small firm creates super-realistic displays for stop-action movies. Sure, they told us, we can fabricate two replica cook stoves so realistic



The Webbperfection Model 120. The stove, which burned diesel fuel, WP-120's had one top burner and an oven. The LCI-713 had two, side by side.

visitors will think they *are* real. As real as the \$11,000 the company quoted to fab the replicas.

The Crew decided they could do better. John Gillon, Rich Lovell, Jerry Gilmartin and J Wandres (J did the original model and legwork, with historian, Dave McKay, approving the design) have started fabricating 2 replica stoves from steel using common parts such as angle iron, rivets bolts and sheet steel to achieve a close facsimile of the actual stove in size and shape and outward appearance. The total estimated cost of the steel stove replicas that we are building ourselves is well below \$1000." (See *Restoration Update*, P.5)

Eagle Eyes on the LCI: Who is J.P. Powell, & What is he doing onboard the LCI-713?

In February 2016 Jerry Gilmartin and J. Wandres attended the Honor Court ceremony to award Johnathan “J.P.” Powell the rank of Eagle Scout. A Senior Patrol Leader in Troop 213, Hillsboro and it’s Venture Crew 217, Powell graduated in June from Century High School, Hillsboro, Oregon.

“J.P.,” -- whose father and Gilmartin both work at Intel in Hillsboro -- had heard about the volunteers restoring the LCI-713. As one requirement to earn his Eagle Scout badge, J.P. had to demonstrate an ability to manage and supervise a group of younger scouts in a project. Gilmartin suggested he visit the LCI and scope out a project. Powell and his Scout patrol arrived in March 2015 and immediately set to work to restring bunk covers in the crew’s compartment. When asked how he came by his managerial know-how, Powell replied, “I took Scout Leader’s training to learn how other senior scouts managed their projects.”

J.P. was on hand in the spring of 2016 when Eagle candidate Parker Drew of Troop 213 and his patrol came on board the LCI to manage his group’s project. Eagle Candidate Andrew Crane has now also completed his project.

AFMM continues its role of providing a platform for Sea Scouts and Sea Cadets to visit historic navy vessels, and learn the importance of preserving the U.S. Navy’s heritage.



“JP” Powell and Andrew Crane. Both Eagle Scouts now with LCI-713 projects under their belt.

If it looks like a DUKW . . .

By Rich Lovell, USN (Ret); AFMM

Forty members of the Military Vehicle Collectors Club of Oregon held their July meeting on board LCI-713. Arriving the day after Independence Day the MVCC members, grandparents and grandkids, were ferried across Portland’s Swan Island lagoon in Steve Greenberg’s DUKW. Five members of the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum welcomed the collectors aboard. Several of the MVCCers had visited LCI-713 the year before and were amazed at the progress the volunteer crew has made.

The DUKW was designed by Lieutenant Frank Speir, an engineer with M.I.T, yacht designer Rod Stephenson and British sailor Dennis Puleston. The U.S. Army initially said, “thanks but no thanks.” However, the 6.5-ton, 31-by-8-foot wide vehicle proved its worth. The six-wheel-drive vehicle had dual rear axles, like the World War II CCKW truck, and is powered by a 270-cubic inch General Motors engine. On land the vehicle could do 50 miles per hour. The DUKW’s single prop could push the vessel at 5 knots in water.



DUKW on the way to the 713

In World War II 2,000 DUKWs were sent to the U.K. under the Lend Lease program and served at major invasion sites, including Normandy. During the Korean war DUKWs provided crucial support in the Battle of the Pusan Perimeter. They have been used in Australia for flood relief. In Texas, a club called Duck Riders of Grapevine helped out following Hurricane Katrina. A DUKW which is popular in Seattle parades is the “Moby Duck.”

LCI-471, A MISSING CODE, THE SECRET MESSAGE AND FEDEX

It was difficult to know what Mary Smith, 36, and her brother, James, 25, thought as they toured LCI-713 moored in Portland's Swan Island Lagoon. Mary said to her dad, Thomas Hardy, that this Landing Craft Infantry, like the one their grandfather had served on, seemed "smaller" than what they thought a warship should look like. Did they wonder about the secret message in February 1945 that made it possible for them and their father to visit this LCI in March 2016?

Here is how it went down, on 17 February 1945 at Iwo Jima: LCI (G) 471, commanded by LT(jg) Robert S. Hudgins, was one small unit of the U.S. Fifth Fleet set to assault the Japanese-held island on 19 February 1945. In addition to 40mm and 20mm cannons, the LCI gunboats carried deck-mounted 4.5-inch rocket launchers. The 471's communications officer was Ensign David H. Hardy. The LCI group was ordered to close on the volcanic sandy beaches. Their mission: cover U.S. Navy U.D.T swimmers sent in to clear the waters of obstacles and mines.

But the secret code was missing

Some of the LCIs had closed to 1,000 yards of the beaches, and became sitting ducks for Japanese gunners who had the waters range-marked. When LCI 438 – the unit's flagship – was severely damaged, the flag moved to LCI (G) 471. The ship's battle report notes precise times: "1106 relieved LCI (G) 438 and . . . drew heavy enemy fire. 1109 commenced firing all guns . . . received direct hit (judged to be a 5-inch shell) . . . 1125 headed back into beach. 1128 received hit on forecastle, which knocked out the No. 1 40mm gun, killed 9 men and wounded 6 others."

But not Ensign David H. Hardy. His battle station was the No. 1 gun, but he was not there: Captain Hudgins had directed him to the radio room to decode a secret message that would give the LCIs their next orders. But Hardy did not have the proper key to decode the message! Then, minutes later, that single enemy shell scored a direct hit on the forward No. 1 gun.

At Iwo Jima one LCI was sunk by enemy fire. LCI (G) 449 received severe damage and suffered multiple casualties, but its skipper, LT (jg) Rufus Herring, kept firing back at the Japanese. For his bravery Lieutenant Herring was awarded the Medal of Honor. Lieutenant Robert S. Hudgins of LCI (G) 471, and other

commanding officers of the LCI group, earned the Navy Cross. The unit earned a Presidential Unit Citation.

Thomas Hardy is a professor at the Army's elite Command and General Staff College, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He teaches a course called "Large Unit Operations," required of all Army Majors. When Hardy comes to the West Coast to visit family he visits LCI-713. March 2016 was his third visit. In a way, he says, by inviting his grandchildren to visit the ship he felt he was also helping to bring to life, the bravery of their grandfather in the face of battle.



Paid forward -- in full

One troop compartment on board LCI-713 has been turned into a museum about amphibious warfare. Among the models is LCI (G) 471. It had belonged to the former navy officer who went on to become Judge R. Stanley "Hudge" Hudgins, who lived in Virginia Beach, Virginia. A member of the national LCI organization, Hudgins had won the model in a raffle held at the LCI veterans' reunion. Before he died "Hudge" entrusted the 4-foot model to a friend. After the friend died his sister didn't know what to do with the model. So she and her daughter searched online and found AFMM in Portland, and co-founder Gordon Smith. The woman agreed to ship the model to Portland. However, at the FedEx office in Virginia Beach, the clerk said the shipping charge would be \$360 – more than she could afford. At that moment, in a "pay-it-forward" gesture, a stranger stepped forward and paid the shipping cost. Which is why Thomas Hardy's kids could see what grandfather's ship really looked like.

The “Stars” Amongst Mortals

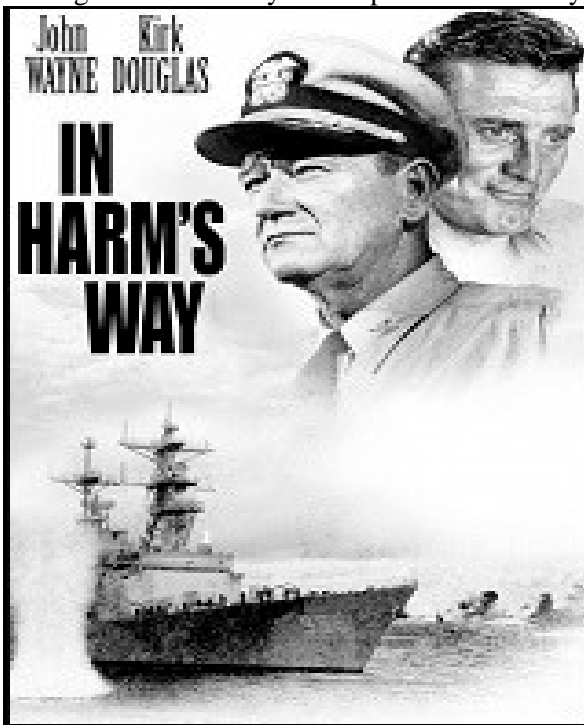
During World War II several who served in the U.S. Navy became Hollywood stars. Most have passed on but we remember them from their silver screen roles.

Eddie Albert (Heimberg) dropped his last name because people called him “Hamburger.” He served in the USS *Sheridan* (APA-151). An LCVP coxswain, Albert was sector control boat in the Tarawa assault of November 1943. Coral reefs kept Marines from landing on Betio Island. Albert disregarded orders to withdraw, and went in as close as possible to recover wounded and dead marines. He earned the Bronze Star. **Movies:** In *The Longest Day* he was C.O., 29th Infantry division.

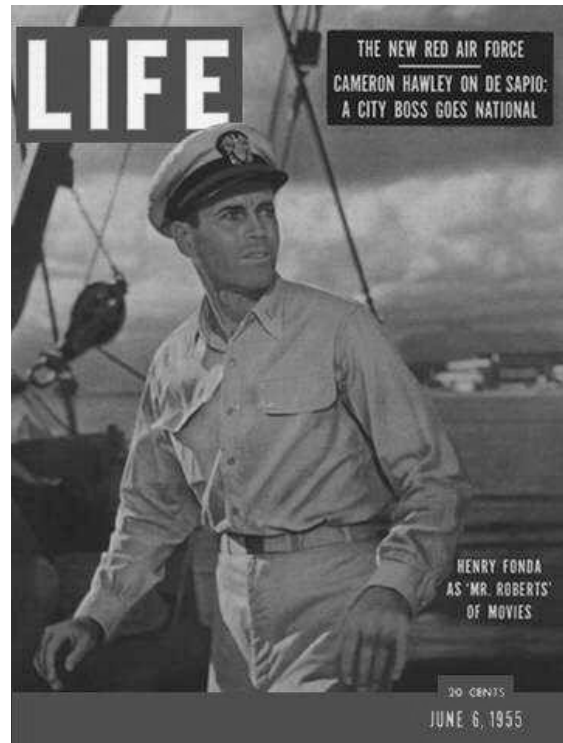
Ernest Borgnine (Ernes Borgnino) Gunner’s mate on the USS *Lamberton* (DD-119). **Movies:** Sgt. “Fatso” Judson in *From Here to Eternity*, and “Cobra” in the TV series, *McHale’s Navy*.

Tony Curtis (Bernard Schwartz) A signalman on sub tender USS *Proteus* (AS-19). **Movies:** In *The Sands of Iwo Jima* Curtis portrayed Ira Hayes, a Pima Indian who helped raise the second flag over Mount Suribachi.

Kirk Douglas (Issur Danielovitch): Sub chaser PC-1139. **Movies:** In *In Harm’s Way* he was X.O. Cdr. Eddington to John Wayne’s Capt. “Rock” Torrey.



Henry Fonda: joined the navy because, “I don’t want to be in a fake [Hollywood] war. Fonda served in the USS *Satterlee* (DD-626). **Movies:** “Doug Roberts” in *Mister Roberts*. In *Midway* he was Admiral Nimitz.



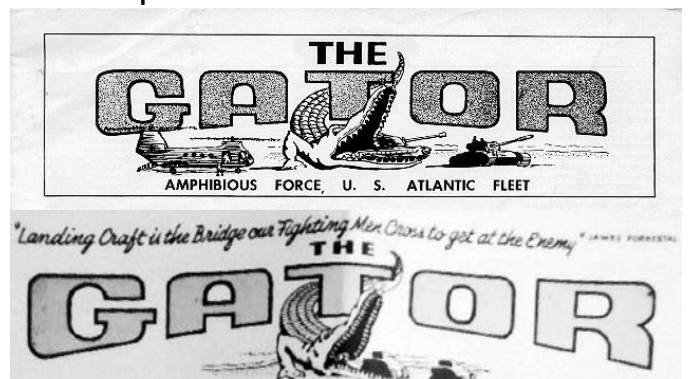
Don Rickles: A comedian known for his acid, rapid-fire *ripistes*, Rickles served on the motor torpedo boat tender USS *Cyrene* (AGP-13). **Movies:** In *Run Silent, Run Deep* with Burt Lancaster and Clark Gable, Rickles was loud-mouth “Quartermaster Ruby,” whose big line was “If ya wanna sing go in the head.”

Rod Steiger: At 16, on the USS *Nashville* (CL-38) as it escorted the USS *Hornet* into Tokyo Bay for the Japanese surrender to end World War II. **Movies:** In *The Longest Day* Steiger was C.O. of a U.S. destroyer.

And now it can be told:

J. Wandres, LCI-713’s public affairs specialist, was in *Experiment in Terror*, (1962) with Glenn Ford and Lee Remick. Wandres was one of the madding crowd at San Francisco’s Candlestick Park, fleeing a crazed gunman. Of his eight second on-screen role Wandres recalled, “It was, maybe, the *worst* story ever told by Hollywood. But we extras got to chow down with the stars.”

In the spirit of:



Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum

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NW LCI National Reunion April 2016, Looking Good!