



## Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum

### Home of the LCI-713

An Oregon Based Non-Profit Charitable Organization

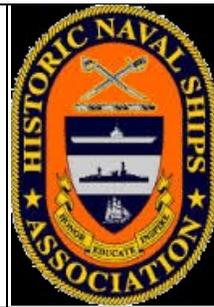
PO Box 17220

Portland, Oregon 97217

Phone: 541-226-5427

[afmm@amphibiousforces.org](mailto:afmm@amphibiousforces.org)

12/5/2015



Dear AFMM members, crew and friends, as well as new and long-term supporters,

This has been a really productive year for us. We are now in our second year at Port of Portland Berth 308, the Swan Island Lagoon. Having a secure berth enables us to work on multiple projects and to plan for the continued long-term restoration of our historic Landing Craft Infantry. Having a secure location for parking has also encouraged families and groups to come visit the ship. Our visits to the 713 have gone up dramatically!

We have added two new members to our board of directors. John Ragno is a retired educator and has served as an “ambassador” with the People to People program. When it comes to applying “haze gray” paint, John is no amateur. Our other new board member is John “J.” Wandres. A retired navy chief public affairs specialist and published writer, “J.” has broadened our visibility with the public and, in fact, has launched our new LCI newsletter: “Deck Log of the LCI(L)713.” Please check out the inaugural issue.

We have also expanded our virtual “footprint.” You can keep up with our progress on Facebook.com/lci713 and our new AFMM website: [www.lci713.com](http://www.lci713.com). The old [www.amphibiousforces.org](http://www.amphibiousforces.org) also links to the new site. You can now also help us simply by shopping at Amazon! To get started, click the Amazon Link on our homepage. This links your Amazon account to the AFMM non-profit. Then to shop use: [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com). Amazon will then donate a small percentage of your purchase to the AFMM! Stay tuned for other programs like this too!

Our really good news is that the AFMM and Vigor Industrial have developed a roadmap toward getting a new hull for the LCI-713. Check the newsletter for details.

***But we still need your continued support to make it happen!*** Our yearly administrative costs (from Port fees and insurance to postage stamps) run more than \$10,000. We count on our LCI supporters and the larger amphibious family to help us stay the course. Thanks to your help, we are at least 75-percent restored – *above* the waterline. Our challenge is to raise funds to restore the hull of the 70-year old ship.

You can make a tax-deductible contribution via PayPal to our e-mail address or online via our website (Click: “Membership/Donation”). Or if you prefer the good old fashioned check, the donation form is on the back. As always, \$100 donors get a plaque on our annual donation board and \$250 donors get a Lifejacket Memorial.

Thank you all so much. We hope you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year!

We wish you all fair winds and following seas,

Rick Holmes, AFMM President



# We Need This Stuff!

Check our website for the complete list.

Friends of the LCI 713, We need these items to complete our restoration. If you know where we may find any, let us know. Or, if you are willing to donate an item or cash equivalent for us to purchase, we will mount a bronze plaque in your honor along with the item. Thank you all for you continued support of our group!

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
|   |  |  |   |
| <p>Flat Deck Barge (40x160 Min)<br/>To borrow or have donated</p> | <p>WWII Helmet, Talker Type<br/>Mark 2</p>                     | <p>No. 2 torpedo Binnacle</p>                  | <p>WWII Berger Fairlead</p>               |
|   |  |  |   |
| <p>20mm Gunmounts(4)<br/>20mm Orelikon Cannons(3)</p>             | <p>Diesel Stove (2) We can Fab<br/>mock-ups for \$1200 Ea.</p> | <p>Coffee Pot</p>                              | <p>Anti Aircraft Range Indicator</p>      |
|   |  |  |   |
| <p>WWII NDO Gas Mask, Mark 1</p>                                  | <p>20mm Ammo Locker (3)</p>                                    | <p>Multi Purpose Signal Light<br/>Type "A"</p> | <p>Taffrail log- tells ships speed. s</p> |

(Cut Here and return your contribution)

**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 by us. If possible, please keep us up to date on your contact info for our mailings, though. 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 \_\_\_\_\_

# Deck Log of the USS LCI(L) 713 /1



## ***AFMM, VIGOR SHIPYARD DISCUSS LCI-713 REPAIRS***

Rick Holmes, President of AFMM, and a committee have met with Vigor Shipbuilding & Repair, Portland, to discuss options for installing new steel plating over the hull bottom of the historic 70-year old amphibious landing craft, LCI (L) 713, now at Port of Portland Berth 308, Swan Island Lagoon.

*See: VIGOR Page 3*



A 400 Ton Crane could lift the LCI onto a barge



## ***Gordon Smith Featured on ABC-TV Vets' Day News.***

Gordon Smith, World War II veteran of LCI-43, co-founder of the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum, and guiding voice for restoration of its LCI-713, was featured in a Veterans' Day tribute to the Greatest Generation. KATU-TV, the ABC affiliate in Portland, interviewed Smith on board the landing craft. The feature was arranged through AFMM Board member John Ragno, whose father, LT (jg) Don Ragno, was the C.O. of LCI-43 when QM1 Smith was on board.

*See: SMITH, Page 4*

# Deck Log of the USS LCI(L) 713 /2

## It's all about: Location! Location! Location!

The big motor coach entered a secure area of Portland's Swan Island Industrial Park. Forty visitors from the FBI Citizen Academy Alumni Ass'n stepped down. They were in Portland for a conference and their visit included tours of two remarkable survivors of World War II: The restored PT-658, and LCI 713. The amphibious Landing Craft Infantry is the last vessel of its type still afloat, still looking as it did when she served in World War II in the Pacific war. Originally moored at Vancouver, Washington, in the Columbia

River next to a hotel, the LCI had to be moved to a backwater channel of the river. In September 2014 a good friend of the LCI got Port of Portland to arrange a moorage at Swan Island lagoon, next to PT-658.

Access at Swan Island lets the LCI host more groups and carry out AFMM's mission to promote maritime history. LCI-713 is registered as a National Historic Site, and is a member of the Historic Naval Ships Association -- HNSA. Eventually, both vessels will become part of Portland's

Maritime Museum, on the Willamette River, along with the historic SS *Portland*, a restored, operational stern-wheel tugboat, and the USS *Blueback*, the last non-nuclear navy submarine.

Other groups to visit the LCI in 2015 include veterans from the USS *Seminole*, the USS *Wahoo*, Eagle Scouts from Hillsboro, Portland Sea Cadets, the Young Marines, Military Vehicle Collectors Club of Oregon, and the Vintage Chevrolet Club of America.

**For visiting check:**  
[www.lci713.com](http://www.lci713.com)



### LCI+PTB+OMM = PWA

The Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum, Inc., which owns Landing Craft Infantry-713, has joined with Patrol-Torpedo Boat 658 and the Oregon Maritime Museum to launch an organization to promote Portland as a regional maritime heritage destination. The newly-formed Portland Waterfront Alliance (PWA) plans to chart a course to promote the Rose City as a major destination site of maritime history and development, and maritime tourism.

Oregon's Columbia and Willamette Rivers have played a key role in exploration and development of the Pacific Northwest. Barge traffic on the Columbia River carries manufactured goods and produce from inland centers including Richland, Washington and



Lewiston, Idaho. During World War II, Portland's Kaiser shipbuilding Corporation launched Liberty ships. Albina Engine and Marine, and Commercial Ironworks also built amphibious landing craft.

Portland is already "homeport" to a diverse fleet of historic vessels. The SS *Portland* is the only stern wheel tugboat afloat and serves as the flagship of the Oregon Maritime Museum. Berthed in the Willamette River at OMSI – the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry – is the USS *Blueback*. The SS-581 is the last non-nuclear powered submarine built for the U.S. Navy. At the Swan Island basin is *PT-658*, a Higgins-built, wood-hulled motor torpedo boat. It shares a berth with *LCI-713*.

# Deck Log of the USS LCI(L) 713 /3

## AFMM Seeks Cost-savings way to Replate LCI Hull



Continued from *VIGOR*, Page 1

In a meeting with Vigor Shipbuilding's director of operations and its estimating director, Rick Holmes said AFMM would work with the company to find ways to repair the LCI hull as efficiently and economically as possible. If the 158 by 24-foot long landing craft were put into dry dock, welding on new steel plating could be done in as little as a month, but the cost would be way above AFMM's means. Through an Oregon State grant AFMM was able to purchase enough 5/16<sup>th</sup> inch-thick plate to do the job. A less expensive method would be for AFMM to rent a 400-ton seagoing crane, and secure the use of a large barge. The crane would lift the ship onto the barge, onto blocks, while the work is done. The barge would be parked off site, with work being done as Vigor's resources and AFMM's finances permit. Holmes suggested that the LCI could serve as a training platform for student welders training for shipyard repair. The LCI has never been out of water since its launch in 1944 and the hull is worn thin and

corroded. The LCI volunteer crew is using other means to ensure the ship stays afloat while at its berth at Swan Island.



**Like this LCS, our LCI-713 would be blocked on a large barge, and re-hulled as time and resources permit.**

# Deck Log of the USS LCI(L) 713 /4

SMITH, from Page 1

Smith recalled that life on board the LCI was not easy. When asked what was the ship's most harrowing period, Gordon paused then spoke one word: "Anzio." In mission after mission to the invasion beach the allied assault fleet came under constant fire from German guns, including the monster railcar-mounted Krupp K-5E, "Anzio Annie," which could hurl a 500-pound shell 20 miles.

## And a postcard to a POWs Parents

Once the Allies secured the Anzio beachhead, captured German P.O.W.s were transported by LSTs and LCIs for processing. One day, a marine guard called up to LCI-43 that one of the soldiers claimed he was from Portland, Oregon. Gordon Smith went ashore to question the man.

"Ja" he said in good English, he was from Portland. I asked which high school he went to. He gave me that name, too." Apparently, the soldier, an American citizen whose parents were German, had been in Germany when the war broke out, and could not get back to the U.S.A., and was conscripted into the Army. Smith took down the man's home address, and wrote to his parents in Portland. It would not be until after the war and Gordon Smith returned home to Portland that he was able to meet the soldier's mother. "Thank God, she told me. We had no way to know if our son was safe or even alive."



## The Legacy of LCI-471 and a friend at Fedex

In January 2015 American and Japanese officials and veterans of both forces returned to Iwo Jima to commemorate those who lost their lives in the battle of 19 January 1945, during which the Allies re-took the Japanese-held fortress in the Pacific.

Little known and long forgotten is the engagement two days *before* the Allied invasion when a flotilla of LCI gunboats approached the heavily defended island. Their mission was to provide cover support for navy UDT swimmers sent in to clear invasion beaches of obstacles. The Japanese thought



the LCIs were the *main* invasion force and opened fire with 5- and 8-inch guns.

The LCI gunboats returned fire with their 4.5-inch rockets. One LCI was sunk and several others suffered severe damage and multiple casualties. One LCI skipper earned the Medal of Honor for bravery. Lieutenant (jg) Robert S. Hudgins brought his LCI-471 and crew through the battle. He and each of the other LCI commanders were awarded the Navy Cross.

Fifty years later R. Stanley Hudgins was serving as a judge in Virginia Beach. He attended a reunion of LCI sailors, and won the raffle of a model LCI. He had the builder, Carl Chapelle, affix the numbers 471 to the hull.

Before Judge "Hudge" Hudgins died in 2011 he left the model in the care of a friend. The friend's surviving sister didn't know what to do with the model, but found AFMM and the LCI-713 after an online search. At the FedEx office in Virginia Beach a stranger paid the cost to ship the model to AFMM in Portland. Today, the model of LCI (G) 471 is a proud addition to AFMM's museum, on board LCI (L) 713.

# Deck Log of the USS LCI(L) 713 /5

## OPERATION SHINGLE: ANZIO – JAN '44

With Gen. Eisenhower headed north in 1943 to prepare for Operation Overlord, British commanders reopened the plan to invade southern Italy and break through the German "Gustav" line - heavily fortified positions across the peninsula north of Naples. Anzio, 48 km south of Rome, was the point of insertion. The Germans were caught off guard and were not prepared for the success of the Allied landings. Within a week the Allied forces had advanced several miles inland.



Our Gordon Smith recalls that LCI-39 was to port, his LCI-43 was to starboard and LCI-20 was in the middle. We were strafed by eight German Focke-Wolfs, carrying 500-pound bombs. LCI-20 took a direct hit and sank. There were many fatalities.



To support the Allied invasion Task Force 81, under Admiral Lowry, consisted of more than 250 combat-loaded and support vessels, including LCI-43. The invasion began at 0200 on 22 January 1944. By nightfall, 90-percent of the Allied invasion force was ashore: more

than 36,000 fighting troops and 3,200 combat vehicles.

But the Germans were not asleep, and Luftwaffe planes had bombed allied supply depots and sunk two ships -one a hospital ship. Within a week nine German divisions - 70,000 combatants - were on the march north from the fortified Gustav Line for a counter-offensive.



Nearly 140,000 Germans faced 96,500 Allied forces. A naval bombardment inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. Under Gen. Lucian Truscott, The U.S. VI Corps launched a massive artillery barrage. On one day Allied gunners fired 66,000 shells, decimating German positions.

Also helping to turn the tide was the vastly superior Allied resupply system. Every day six LSTs each offloaded a convoy of 50 "deuce-and-a-half" trucks, which sped to the front with ammunition, fuel and rations. LCTs and LCIs including LCI-43 also carried in supplies and brought out thousands of defeated German prisoners of war. By May 24 it was the beginning of the end to the German defense of southern Italy.

Adapted from "Anzio 1944" by Clayton D. Laurie, U.S. Army Center for Military History.

**Below:** Anzio today: a popular Italian resort town.



# Deck Log of the USS LCI(L) 713 /6

## **Marilyn And Mary:**

### **LCI-713's Chief Help-mates.**

When doing research on LCI-713, AFMM Vice President Rich Lovell and AFMM Secretary Dave McKay take along their research associates, to whom they have long been married: Marilyn Lovell and Mary McKay.

Rich and Marilyn Lovell frequently devote weekends to scoping out estate sales. They begin with an online search on Estatefinder.com and Craigslist looking for notices that include "military and World War II items including uniforms." Marilyn uses GPS to find estate sales within a couple hours of their home in southwest Washington. "We select neighborhoods popular with retirement-age folks."

Rich Lovell always wears his LCI-713 cap and LCI jersey when he and Marilyn go estate-saleing. "If I see something and the price is too high I will tell the homeowner or the sale manager that I am a volunteer with a nonprofit organization (AFMM). I may ask if they will donate an item in the name of the deceased veteran." Lovell, with 22 years of active and reserve naval service, is also a veteran of the U.S. Postal Service. On a recent family trip he and Marilyn attended the National LCI Association conference in Charleston, South Carolina. They also took in several military and naval museums and spoke with restoration specialists, information useful in the restoration of LCI-713.



**Hypothetical rank and rate icon of Chief Help-Mate. The badge is awarded for service above and beyond but not always acknowledged in doing the mission.**

Dave McKay also knows what to look for. On a family trip that included a visit to the National Archives II at College Park, Maryland, Dave requested dozens of archival boxes that hold original documents related to LCI-713. With a digital camera at the ready on a stand Mary McKay clicked some 40,000 images of LCI (L) 713 documents. Now indexed and filed on his computer, Dave can answer any questions about the ship. Blueprints of the galley's cookstove? No problem. In color, yet.

Dave McKay is also trying to reconstruct the "life" of LCI-713. He knows the ship was launched in September 1944 by the George Lawley shipyard in Neponset, Massachusetts, and that the ship took part in two actions against Japanese held Pacific Islands. "We know the first commanding officer was LT (jg) Walter Parris. But what was his hometown? Where did he go to college? Married? Kids . . . grandkids?" By reconstructing lives of the ship's officers and crew McKay hopes to recreate a living history of the ship.

---

**WHAT IS A VETERAN?**  
**A veteran is a woman or man, who has served on active duty or in the reserve or the National Guard, and who at one point wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America," for an amount "up to and including my life." That is honor. There are too many people who no longer understand this.**