

LCI 713 Restoration Progress Update

January 2011, By Jerry Gilmartin, AFMM Secretary

Warm 2011 greetings from the USS LCI713 and the Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum (AFMM)! Lots of exciting events have been happening on board the LCI in the last few months. We have obtained the services of several new volunteers, and they have been getting lots of items crossed off the work list. Here is a sampling of some of the recent developments:

Sam Kimpton, a former active duty USN Boatswain's Mate, has taken over responsibility for making the LCI "ship shape". He has completely cleaned out and organized the Bos'uns Locker (located beneath the bow ramp in the foc'sle) and has organized it and made it into a working compartment taking advantage of the large amount of storage for ships lines, small stuff (ropes) and tackle. Sam even started by painting the inside of the hatch white. The rest of the locker still needs to be descaled and painted, but it sure looks a lot better after his attention.



Sam says get to work!



New Genset and Xfer Switches



Sam's Coxcombing

Another project that Sam has completed is the installation of fancy knot work called "coxcombing" all along the handrails and grab rails that are on the ladder leading to the after Troop Compartment #4. After Sam installed the coxcombing, he proceeded to give it several coats of shellac and varnish to keep it looking sharp. It adds an air of nautical pride to the whole compartment.

On the electrical front, new volunteer Larry Baumann, (working with volunteer Woody Woodruff) has installed the new Kubota 7 kw diesel electric generator in the engine room and connected it to the electrical distribution system. Larry is a commercial electrician who does home and business wiring projects, and was the perfect man for the job. Larry even obtained the technical manuals from the factory for the generator so he could be sure the installation went off without a hitch. Larry has also been helping Jerry Gilmartin organize the electrical power panel and wire runs to help make the electrical system more efficient, more organized, and safer.

Now, thanks to donations by Mark Stevens and the Army Reserve, we have 3 different generators that we can start and run at different times depending upon the electricity demands of the moment. The 7kw is the perfect size, since it can supply enough power to run the lights and numerous fans, yet it does not burn as much fuel as the larger 10 kw generator up on the stern. If we need to do any energy intensive work, like welding, we can start up the 10kw as it is needed.

Many thanks go out to Woody Woodruff as well. Woody is literally a magician when it comes to fixing engines, welding, or pipe fitting. Woody single-handedly installed the Kubota Generator's engine, and got the fuel system, exhaust system and cooling water systems all hooked up and functional. Woody was able to perform various other welding jobs as well throughout the ship. He is working on a new, stronger and safer

boarding ladder (this will be a gangway that hangs from the side of the ship). Woody is also a pretty fair pipefitter, and has been busy installing new ships plumbing pipes. He even brought along a new volunteer, Chris, who is also a welder. Chris welded a new battery tray to the aft bulkhead in the engine room, and has also done several other welding repairs all over the ship.



Woody after falling into water while trying to keep a barge from banging up the 713.



New work area in troop 4.



We are getting the Head operational. New Flange courtesy of Chuck K.

Still other new work has been in the preservation department. Chris Jones, a local expert salvage diver, and owner of a marine salvage and repair company, was hired to assist us in patching and preserving several leaking double bottom tanks on board the ship. These tanks are being dried out and prepared for painting a chemical rust converter and rust preventer on the interior of these numerous tanks. This action will stabilize the rust so it will not continue to waste away. After the rust converter is cured, plans are to install closed cell blown-in foam. Chris will be the prime contractor handling this effort. AFMM Treasurer, Mark Stevens, has been of great help in finding the rust treatment for the tanks. Mark spent several days inside the first tank to be treated, and acted as the “proof of concept” by painting the entire tank interior on his own. Additionally volunteers John Gillon and Jerry Gilmartin spent several days down inside the double bottom tanks installing epoxy metal sealer to stop the progressive leaks via numerous holes between two of the worst tanks. With Chris Jones and his crews’ assistance, we are really coming close to the goal of preserving the double bottom tanks. These tanks will then be watertight and able to last until we can replace the compromised bottom plates on the LCI in drydock.



Cleanups! Wardroom



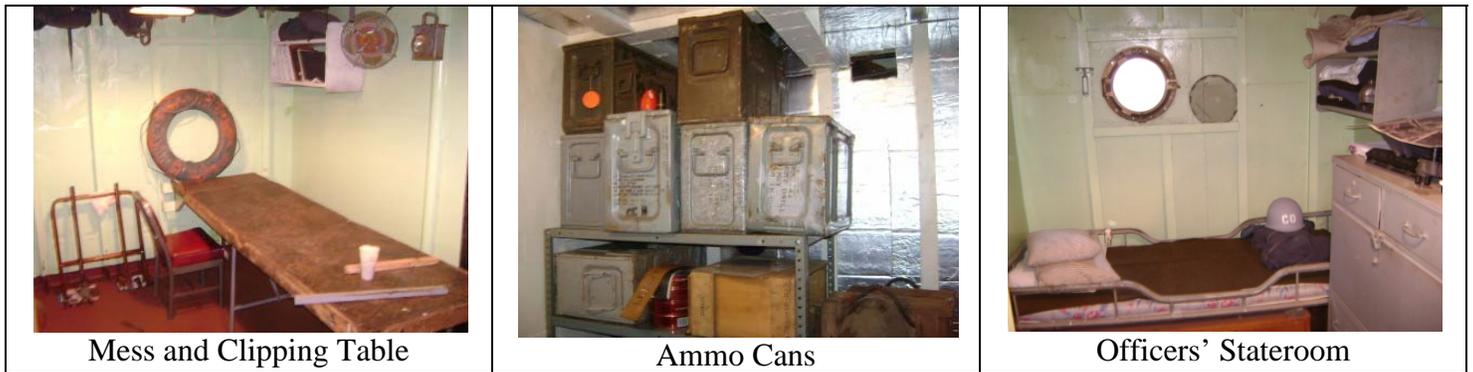
Troop Officers' quarters



Crew Mess Display Shelf

Numerous crew volunteers have been very busy cleaning up the ship and organizing the material in storage. The paint and other flammables in Troop Compartment #4 (aft of engine room) have been moved into the Ammunition Locker. The ammo locker has been provided with shelving for proper storage, and all the empty ammo cans have been stored in there as well. The ammo locker is provided with a magazine flooding system to

douse any fires if they break out. Meanwhile, back in Troop #4, both work benches have been installed and all tool storage has been centralized in one place. This was needed in order to make room for Chris Jones and his crew to work inside Troop Compartment #3 on the double bottom tanks.



Mess and Clipping Table

Ammo Cans

Officers' Stateroom

Up in the Bow Ramp Room (Foc'sle) the entire compartment has also been re-organized and neatened. Several block and tackle sets have been installed to re-create the proper look and feel of the WW2 vintage ship. New lines are flemished (coiled) on the deck. Lots of non-authentic items have been removed and relocated from the compartment. Additionally, the thermal insulation has been completely installed into the overhead, and then covered with cloth lagging. It is now waiting for the final coat of white paint to the inside bulkheads and overhead surfaces to look complete.

Up on the Gun Deck above the Foc'sle on the bow, the 20mm tripod gun mount donated by the USS Salem Maritime Museum has been completely wire wheeled and painted. Sam Kimpton, Jerry Gilmartin and John Gillon worked hard to get finished before the weather set in last October. Now the spiral spring housing can be wound to offset the weight of the gun barrel and she will be as good as new! John Gillon can manufacture a spanner wrench needed for tensioning the spring. The 20mm cannon fits into the cradle perfectly, and it can be elevated and trained almost effortlessly.

Recently, the broken Waukesha Generator has finally been removed from the Engine Room. It had a broken cylinder sleeve liner and missing piston and was not cost effective to repair. Plans have been made to relocate the Army surplus 10kw diesel generator set from the fantail to the engine room and be installed in the spot of the now removed Waukesha. Numerous volunteers, most notably Rick Holmes, Mark Stevens, Woody Woodruff, Larry Baumann, Sam Kimpton and many others were instrumental in doing the back breaking labor it took to remove this old engine. Thanks shipmates!

On a more lighthearted note, John Gillon and Jerry Gilmartin have been collaborating to make a replica of the crews folding mess table now mounted in the Messing and Clipping Compartment. The new table will be mounted in the Crews Mess Compartment, and will serve as the prototype for 2-3 other tables to be made after that. These tables will be attached to the bulkhead, and be able to stow up against the bulkhead when folded. The first table has steel border skirts with a wood tabletop covered with linoleum, and has folding legs and hinges and wooden fiddly boards that extend upwards to keep the plates from sliding off of the table when at sea. At the time of this story, the table is about 90% completed.

Chuck Kellogg has recently been making a big "stink" about the LCI713's lack of a toilet facility. This subject was brought up at a recent Board Meeting. Chuck was able to obtain several pledges to donate \$100 each to an "LCI713 Head Fund" Work has already begun on the installation of a real working and flushing toilet to be

installed inside the Officers' Head. The original fixture will be used, and will be routed to a stainless steel 155 gallon Waste Collection and Holding Tank (CHT) in the Engine Room. Licensed Marine Electrician Dave Pennington was coerced by Chuck into helping us set up a new system. Volunteers Woody and Chris have been helping out with welding and connecting the system piping. Chuck was able to manufacture a custom built toilet adapter flange that will allow the toilet bowl to be mounted to the deck inside the Officers' Head. All that is needed next is installing a small flush tank, a water refilling pump and the disposal pump. The project is about 75% complete. Here is to good flushing in the near future! Many visitors to the ship will really appreciate this added comfort on board the LCI713. It will be just like old times!

Jerry Ubigau has also recently installed and painted the new authentic First Aid locker in the Crews Mess. The locker was painted white and then stenciled with the large red lettering "First Aid". This locker is now both functional as a well stocked first aid kit and is correct in accordance with the blueprints for the ship. Thanks Jerry for all your dedication in seeing this project through to completion!

If you have not been on board the LCI713 for a while, you would really be pleased with all the progress that has been made, especially where the Life Jacket Dedication project is concerned! The Life Jackets can be sponsored for the donation of \$250, which will then be mounted into overhead with steel brackets and a brass plaque with each person's dedication text. The program has been a huge success, and has been able to raise over \$10,000 for the LCI restoration so far! Almost the entire Crews' Mess Compartment overhead has been covered with new Life Jackets and Plaques! More of these Life Jackets are available if you would like to purchase one to help out with the restoration of the ship.

Finally, Rick Holmes and Sam have been researching the correct type of paint to purchase for painting the outside of the ship. Sam Kimpton found out that Portland's Cascade Gen Shipyard uses a local company to supply paint to modern US Navy ships being overhauled in the shipyard, and the LCI713 obtained a sample of this high quality epoxy paint for use on the deck. When the weather improves a little, the plans are to use this new paint and see how well it works. Then we will get some more if it has good results.

These are exciting times to be down working on the restoration of the LCI713! We have a full work list with items just waiting for volunteers to help complete. We are always looking for new (and the return of old) volunteers! Please consider coming down and joining us in this important historical work. Not only is it a labor of love, but you can really do your part in helping to preserve a real historic treasure. Not to mention the whole crew has a great feeling of "camaraderie" as we work together on "Elsie". Even if you want to come down just for a visit, and remember old times over a steaming cup of real Navy Joe, or see what it must have been like to have served on the smallest US Navy ship we would like to extend to you the invitation to do just that. Stay tuned for future updates and we hope to see you all come down and give us a hand!

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