



Elsie Item

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

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

ISSUE 76

JULY 2011

**ONE MORE TIME TO SEE
YOUR OLD FRIENDS!
Don't miss Nashville!**

Full details and registration forms in this issue



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, or to anyone just interested in the history of LCIs. Published quarterly by the USS LCI National Association. John P. Cummer, Editor. Any material for possible publication should be sent to the Editor, preferably by email (cummerj@bellsouth.net) or by regular mail to 302 Pinewood Cottage Lane, Blythewood, SC, 29016.

In This Issue

Lots of information and a good supply of stories which we are certain you will enjoy!

To begin, it is most encouraging to see that long list of new members on page 9! Check it out to see if any of your old shipmates have found their way to the Association. Then, modern technology rises up! On page 10 we tell you about finding that this new social media **Facebook** has a site called "**Remembering LCI Veterans**" which came as quite a surprise. For obvious reasons, most of those making comments are sons, daughters, grandkids of LCI Vets and it's really great! One entry is significant enough for us to reprint it, the story of **Coast Guard LCI 89** at D-Day starts on page 12.

It's a special pleasure to bring you, **Arthur Jaseau's** tribute to **Ens. Lloyd F. Anderson**, of **LCI 1094**. Arthur writes with genuine admiration. Many of us will wish we had such a leader. His account begins on page 14.

Finally, don't miss **Chet Collom's** account of post WWII LCI duty and the news from the Thai Navy of the scuttling of two former LCIs.

Have a good read!

Have you paid your dues?

Just 25 bucks!

Please send it to:

**USS LCI National Association,
c/0 Nehemiah Communications**

101 Rice Bent Way #6

Columbia, SC 29229

Thanks!

A Word from the President/Editor



The financial picture:

The response to our request for donations and dues payment was most encouraging! We were getting pretty near the point where we would have to begin cashing in some of our certificates of deposit; but as of now, we have been able to meet our obligations and have a bit in the cash fund to begin the new year. We are still going to have to mount some kind of a funds campaign to meet our expected shortfall next year; but, in thinking about that, it is most encouraging to see the way you have responded to our call for help in the last issue.

Here is the good news: Between May 1, 2011, and June 23, 2011, we received \$4,565 in dues payments and \$3,535 in contributions for a total of \$8,100!

I want to make special recognition of those shipmates who made donations. The greater majority of them are Life Members who sent in their \$25 as a contribution but there were several who made very substantial donations on top of that. Here is the list of those who came to our assistance:

John K. Ashcraft, LCI 981
Robert Banský, LCI 943
Jefferson Barnes, LCI 658(M)
William O. Barnes III
Albert S. Becker, LCI 491
Walter Berg, LCI 564
Ralph B. Blood, LCI 560(G)
Walter E. Brown, LCI 596
Harry J. Cangany, Sr., LCI 354
Raymond Corbin, Jr.
Robert V. Courant, LCI 529
Carlos Danville, LCI 415
Henri, L. Deltieure, LCI 553
Robert Doughty, LCI 1096
George J. Doyle, LCI 456

Vernon J. Dreibelbis, LCI 949
Lewis S. Evans, LCI 433
Ralph E. Gallant, LCI 632
Joseph H. George, LCI 557
Joseph Goldbert, LCI 445
Charles L. Hach, LCI 543
Charles W. Haynes, LCI (R)651
W. Ralph Holloway, LCI 329
Arthur Jaseau, LCI 461
William E. Keeler
Joseph P. Kohutis, LCI 373
Frederick G. Langston, LCI 228
Michael Lawson
Vernon E. Malmquist, LCI 741
Earl J. Mandley, LCI 433

William C. McVicker, LCI(G) 452
James A. Nance, LCI 440
Michael Pikos,
Jim A. Prime, LCI(G) 22
James R. Ransom, LCI(G) 651
John F. Ring, LCI 540
James T. Roberts, LCI(G) 373
Charles E. Savary, LCI 870
Chris O. Shelvik, LCI(M) 631
Richard J. Wader, LCI(G) 22
George H. Weber
Donald N. Wingrove, LCI 680
Richard T. Wright, LCIs 658 and 1089

To each and every one of these generous shipmates, I express thanks on behalf of all of our Association.

The Nashville Reunion

It's quite apparent that old Father Time is catching up with many of us and that going to a national reunion, as great a thing as that is, is becoming more difficult for many of our shipmates. Registrations are coming in more slowly than in past years, but we decided to dedicate space again in this issue to give you the reunion information and registration blanks along with our urging to come if you possibly can. This could be the last national reunion. It's not pleasant to think of that but we have to be realistic—traveling across the country is just a bit more difficult than it has been. Our hope and expectation is that many of you will make the necessary effort to join your shipmates yet one more time. There are still a lot of sea stories to be told and memories to be recalled!

—John Cummer

Let the Good Times Roll!



Last Call for Hotel Reservations!

SHERATON MUSIC CITY HOTEL – NASHVILLE (615) 885-2200 or (888) 627-7060

(Please reference the USS LSM LSMR/LCI National Association Reunion to obtain the special reunion room rate)

The Sheraton Music City Hotel is located at 777 McGavock Pike, Nashville, TN 37214. Call the hotel for accurate driving directions. Situated on 23 lush acres, located within minutes of downtown Nashville, the Sheraton offers easy access to many of Nashville's attractions, such as The Grand Ole Opry and the Country Music Hall of Fame. All guest rooms feature an oversized room, a balcony or patio, The Sheraton Sweet Sleeper Bed, refrigerator, coffee maker, iron/ironing board, hairdryer, and a spacious bath. Handicapped rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservations. Recreational features include health club facilities, indoor/outdoor pools, and tennis courts. Sheraton Music City is a non-smoking hotel. The hotel provides complimentary parking for its guests. Check-in time is 3:00pm, check-out time is 12:00pm. Restaurants on site are the **Old Hickory Grill**, featuring southern cooking, and **The Veranda** lobby lounge. Room service is also available.

Complimentary airport shuttle service is provided by the hotel from the Nashville International Airport. The shuttle runs from 5:30am until 11:00pm. Proceed to the baggage claim area and once you have claimed your luggage, call the hotel from the courtesy phone in that area for pickup. You may want to consider other transportation services, as space is limited on courtesy services.

If you are driving an RV, call the Nashville KOA at (615) 889-0286 for information, directions and to make a reservation. They are located at 2626 Music Valley Drive, Nashville, TN, approximately 15 minutes from the hotel.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair for the reunion, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Please call their toll free number at (888) 441-7575 for details. All prices quoted include delivery fees.

Vendors, Schedules, and Prices are subject to change.

*****CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL*****
USS LSM-LSMR ASSOCIATION & USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION REUNION - HOTEL RESERVATION FORM
REUNION DATES: SEPTEMBER 7-11, 2011

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

TEL. NUMBER (_____) _____ STARWOOD PREFERRED GUEST # _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ APPROX. TIME _____ DEP. DATE _____

_____ # OF ROOMS NEEDED _____ # OF PEOPLE IN ROOM _____ HANDICAP ACCESS

_____ KING BED _____ 2 DOUBLE BEDS

In the event room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.

RATE: \$109 + tax (currently 15.25% + \$2.50 per night city assessment) Rate will be honored three days before and after reunion, based on availability.

CUT OFF DATE: 08/5/11. Reservations received after this date will be processed based on space and rate availability basis.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 24 hours prior to the day of arrival. Call 615-885-2200 should you need to cancel your room reservation. All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

_____ AMEX _____ DINERS _____ VISA _____ MASTER CARD _____ DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

Mail to: SHERATON MUSIC CITY HOTEL* 777 MCGAVOCK PIKE * NASHVILLE, TN 37214* ATTN: RESERVATIONS

**JOINT REUNION
USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
&
USS LSM LSMR ASSOCIATION
SEPTEMBER 7 – 11, 2011
SHERATON MUSIC CITY – NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

Wednesday, September 7

2:00pm - 7:00pm **Reunion Registration open**
1:00pm - Hospitality Room opens for the duration of the reunion.

Thursday, September 8

9:00am - 10:00am **Reunion Registration open**
11:00am - 3:00pm GEN. JACKSON LUNCH CRUISE (description follows)
3:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open**
4:00pm - 5:00pm LCI Affiliates Meeting

Friday, September 9

8:00am - 8:30am **Reunion Registration open**
9:00am - 2:00pm CITY TOUR (description follows)
3:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open.** Additional hours will be posted at the reunion if necessary.
5:45pm - 10:00pm GRAND OLE OPRY (description follows)

Saturday, September 10

7:00am - 8:30am Breakfast buffet
9:00am - 11:00am Business Meeting for the USS LCI National Association
9:00am - 11:00am Business Meeting for the USS LSM LSMR Association
11:00am - 12:00pm USS LSM LSMR Association Memorial Service
1:00pm - 2:00pm USS LCI National Association Memorial Service
5:00pm - Cash Bar Reception
6:30pm - Banquet and entertainment

Sunday, September 11

Farewells & Departures

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY FOR ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less the non-refundable AFR registration fee (\$7 per person). Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less the non-refundable AFR registration fee. **Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9:00am until 5:00pm Eastern Standard Time, excluding holidays.** Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion. Canceling your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.

TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

GENERAL JACKSON LUNCH CRUISE

Thursday, September 8

The world's grandest showboat cruises the majestic Cumberland River to downtown Nashville, fourteen miles roundtrip. Enjoy a brand new show outfitted with extreme humor, amazing music, and the best food you'll taste this side of the South. Get ready for some true hand-clappin', toe-tappin' Nashville entertainment and hospitality.

11:00am board bus, 3:00pm back at hotel

\$78/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch cruise.

CITY TOUR

Friday, September 9

Begin a tour of Nashville with trained professional guides who will entertain your group with interesting facts, colorful legends, and amusing anecdotes of Nashville and her people. Drive by the Governor's Mansion, as well as homes of several well-known personalities such as Tammy Wynette, Ronnie Milsap, and Minnie Pearl. Drive through Centennial Park and view the Parthenon, a full-scale replica of the original in Greece. Visit the Ryman Auditorium, where the Grand Ole Opry got its start. Originally a church, the Ryman is now home to numerous musical productions. Stop on 2nd Avenue for lunch on your own at one of several different restaurants. Consider Market Street Brewery, Big River Grille, Hard Rock Cafe, or the Wild Horse Saloon.

9:00am board bus, 2:00pm back at hotel

\$46/Person includes bus, guide, and admission. Lunch on your own.

GRAND OLE OPRY

Friday, September 9

During any given Opry show, audiences can expect the best in country, bluegrass, comedy, gospel, and more by Country Music Hall of Famers, cast members who helped establish the Opry as the home of country music, revered superstars, and young artists just starting to make names for themselves. It is the longest-running live radio show in the world. Sit back and enjoy an American Institution at its entertaining best.

5:45pm board bus, 10:00pm back at hotel

\$67/Person includes bus, escort, and show.

Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time.

All trips require a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order. Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. Returned checks will be charged a \$20 fee. You may also register online and pay by credit card at www.afr-reg.com/lcilsn. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before August 5, 2011. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
322 Madison Mews
Norfolk, VA 23510
ATTN: USS LCI NATIONAL ASSN.

| OFFICE USE ONLY | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Check # _____ | Date Received _____ |
| Inputted _____ | Nametag Completed _____ |

| <i>CUT-OFF DATE IS 8/5/11</i> | Price Per | # of People | Total |
|---|------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| <u>TOURS</u> | | | |
| THURSDAY: LUNCH CRUISE | \$78 | | \$ |
| FRIDAY: CITY TOUR | \$46 | | \$ |
| FRIDAY: GRAND OLE OPRY | \$67 | | \$ |
| <u>MEALS</u> | | | |
| SATURDAY: BREAKFAST BUFFET | \$15 | | \$ |
| SATURDAY: BANQUET <i>(Please select your entrée)</i> | | | |
| ROAST STRIP SIRLOIN | \$40 | | \$ |
| CHICKEN MARSALA | \$40 | | \$ |
| SALMON | \$40 | | \$ |
| <u>MANDATORY PER PERSON REGISTRATION FEE</u> | | | |
| Includes Hospitality Room and administrative expenses. | \$20 | | \$ |
| Total Amount Payable to <u>Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.</u> | | | \$ |

PLEASE PRINT AS YOU WANT YOUR NAMETAG TO READ

FIRST NAME _____ LAST NAME _____

LCI PREFIX (LCI, LCI(G), etc.) _____ LCI # _____ EMAIL _____ @ _____

SPOUSE NAME _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

IF YOU HAVE A SEATING PREFERENCE, **OTHER THAN W/ YOUR SHIP**, PLEASE SPECIFY _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

(Sleeping room requirements must be conveyed by attendee directly to hotel)

MUST YOU BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS? YES NO (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

For refunds and cancellations please refer to our policies outlined at the bottom of the reunion program. **CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9:00am-5:00pm EASTERN TIME (excluding holidays)**. Call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion.

Welcome Aboard!

We're happy to welcome these shipmates and friends who have joined since January 1, 2011.

LCI Veterans

Mike Kelly, LCI 445

78 Oak St.
Dedham, MA 02026

Willard W. Schenck, LCI 636

1179 Smoke River Way
Sacramento, CA 95831

Emile J. Roy, LCI 347

7 Ridgeway Ave.
Sanford, ME 04073

John Garofalos, LCI 1091

343 Durant Way
Mill Valley, CA 94941

Richard Hudson, LCI 551

210 Second Street
Greenwood, DE 19950

Charles J. Guarino, LCI 558

1336 Sherwood Ave.
North Tonawanda, NY 14120

Fred Cacici, LCI 43

14 Red Oaks Drive
Hamburg, NJ 07419

Walter Wittholz, LCI ?

767 Edison Road
Auburndale, FL 33823-9369

Philip D. Herrick, LCIs 462 and 464

304 Brooksby Village Dr., #219
Peabody, MA 01960

Friends and Family

(Formerly "Associates")

Mr. William Alloy,

Son of **Daniel Alloy, LCI 87**
4743 Redwood Street
New Orleans, LA 70127-3644

Al Mullins

Son of **Henry Mullins, LCI 439**
810 River Valley Drive
Dacula, GA 30019

Sam L. Shelby

Son of **Lloyd Wrenn Shelby, LCI 343**
2022 N. Eskew Rd.
Boonville, IN 47601

Mrs. Beverly Stock

Wife of **Allan Stock, LCI 498**
131 Schoolhouse Hill Road
Oak Hill, NY 12460

Charles Ritz

Son of **Edward Ritz, LCI 1024**
D-102 Skytown
2-3-8 Sakae-Cho
Atsugi City, Kanaeawa Pref.
T243 Japan

Ms. Mary Mullins

Daughter of **Henry Mullins, LCI 439**
439 Lost Tree Lane
Knoxville, TN 37934

Michael Pimental,

Son of **Manuel Pimental, LCI 192**
404 West King Street
Shippensburg, PA 17257

LCIs on Facebook!

That most interesting modern phenomena, "Facebook" has come to the LCI! I don't know where or how it started (In fact, I'm still struggling to master Facebook!), but a site called "Remembering the LCI Vets" has been established. Treasurer Hal Bleyhl is monitoring this site and is actively encouraging those leaving messages to join our Association. Way to go, Hal! Here are a few of the many entries:

Bill Puida

May 11, 2011

"My father, **Alfred H. Puida**, was on **LCI(G) 437** and served in the South Pacific. He was a Machinist's Mate. I'd love To find anyone else from that ship."

Charlotte Kempf Bruch

June 6, 2011

"Thanks to the Navy World War II Muster Rolls on Ancestry.com I pulled the muster roles on my Dad's Ship, **LCI 1065**. Then I looked each name up to see if I could find them at the place of residence that was on the roll in whitepages.com. I found one name of a man who could possibly have been on that ship. His name was **Morris Cucksey**. I wrote him about a week ago and now he has just called me! He's 88 years old and we had a great chat. More later as I learn more . . . this is an exciting day for me."

David Fellman

May 26, 2011

"My father-in-law, **Daniel Mendelsohn**, passed away on October 20, 2010, at age 88. He served on **LCI 514**. His burial was at Waldheim Cemetery in Forest Park, IL. It was accompanied by a Navy Honor Guard."

Barbara Proko

May 29, 2011

"Thinking of my dad, **Al Prokopovich**, (1917–1989) this weekend (and always). Gratitude, love, and peace to all the men who served aboard **LCI(G) 473** at Iwo Jima."

Our own Chaplain, Michael Gatton!

May 23, 2011

"The June issue of the *Smithsonian Magazine* features an article about Agatha Christie and her Greenway House. On pages 72 and 73, in a photo of the restored library, you will see a mural painted by **Marshall Lee, USCG**, Captain of **LCI 96**. Flotilla 10 tied up on the Dart River below the estate in preparation for D-Day, after the British government appropriated her property for war use. When the war ended and Ms. Christie moved back into the mansion, she refused to allow the government to restore the walls and left instructions in her will which left the property to the British Conservancy stipulating that the murals were to be preserved. The mural is the history of the Coast Guard flotilla from its commissioning up; to the D-Day landings. My dad, **John L. Gatton**, CPO of the 96, visited with Ms. Christie's daughter and son-in-law and shared tea and crumpets , while traveling on the occasion of the 69th anniversary of D-Day. Naturally, we presented them with a bottle of Kentucky's best bourbon!"

Steve Rudge

June 16, 2011

"Don't know if you folks are aware of this, but the Naval Academy Library maintains a Special Collection section of the library that has WWII Ship Action Reports from 1942-1945. My father was CO of **LCI(G)-472** and I found the Action Reports he prepared for his ship. The first link provided below is a guide to these reports that identifies the ship, and the box & folder where the reports are contained. We got these by emailing the library (see address on the 2nd link) and requesting them. The library copies and sent the reports for a fee. My dad's reports were detailed and described their activities during the various landings/battles in which they participated."



LCI 351, first of the round-conn class, poses for the photographer in Boston harbor, May, 1943



LCI (L) 89 AT D-DAY

By

William D. Elder, Boatswain's Mate 1c, LCI(L) 89

An excerpt from World War II's Greatest Amphibious Forces: A Coast Guardsman's story...



LCI 89 photographed in July, 1943, almost one year before her rendezvous with destiny

We felt that this entry on the "Remembering the LCI Vets" Facebook page deserved to be published in its entirety. It was submitted to Facebook by Jim Finkler.

Quietly the "89" slipped her mooring lines at 1730, 5 June, 1944, and sailed out of Weymouth Harbor bay, wind whistling through the mast rigging, into the English channel as the waves washed over her bow. We joined the convoy. There was a low misty overcast sky, northwest wind raising a nasty sea. Waves 8 to 10 feet washing over the deck broke the silence of the night. It made the eighty nautical miles across the channel a long

voyage and an arduous night for the sea sick soldiers who had been aboard since Sunday.

At 0545 a drone of bombers was heard. It was 379 B-17s and B24s flying overhead through the light clouds. They blackened the sky, an overwhelming sight. Their bomb flashes illuminated the horizon. As they flew on, at 0555 the pre-landing bombardment started pounding the beach area. On Omaha's eastern flank the battleship Arkansas fired her 14 inch guns at the beaches' battery on the high cliff at Pointe de la Percee, along with cruisers and destroyers for beachheads Force O-2,

Easy Green, Easy Red, Fox Green and Fox Red near Colleville. On Omaha's western flank the battleship *Texas* trained her 14 inch guns on the cliff Pointe de Hoc batteries with cruisers and destroyers for beachheads Force 0-2 Charlie (the Rangers at Point de Hoc), Dog Green, Dog White and Dog Red near Vierville. We watched the salvos flying, hitting the beach area, billows of smoke pluming up. Sometimes flames would shoot up. We would feel the force-concussion, and hear the resounding blast.

The firing stopped just before the first wave of Sherman Tanks was to hit the beach at D-minus 10, (0620 Hours).

D-Day, H-Hour. 0630 dawns with gray shadows lifted. The momentous day was underway. The LCVPs and LCTs were about to hit the beach. Our ten LCIs in Force Omaha-1 (0-1) had already formed up in two columns heading for the beach, all hands standing at GQ. As I gazed towards the beach and both flanks of sea surface, I was amazed at the vast array of landing craft presented. As we passed a column of LSTs, they were rolling in, the waves splashing against their hulls. The sea conditions were not healthy for the assault craft.

On the 120 foot cliff with Pointe de la Percee before us overlooking our beach area were strong points with machine gun and mortar pillboxes. The destroyer *Thompson* was laying about 2000 yards off the beach firing rounds into the cliff, trying to take the sting out of these batteries before the landings.

By 0700 our daylight stage was playing out before our eyes. It was high drama to witness what was happening: Gunfire hitting all over the water, the obstacles sticking out of the water, mines exploding as the boats hit them—a dreadnought spectacle! A log jam of boats lay ahead of us. All hands were now at their beaching stations in readiness to lower the ramp. The swish of a large shell could be heard passing by us. We were very tense now and scared.

The Navy Beachmaster was signaling all control vessels to suspend their landings. We pulled back some distance away from the shelling. The tide was rushing in fast. A 22 foot high tide was expected today. Our wave was now broken up and the landing areas were disrupted. A little past 0800 some of the LCIs started in on Easy Green, the west flank of Easy Red. As the 91 approached the beach it hit a mine. Flames and smoke shot up. The 92 followed suit, hitting a mine with fire erupting. On our approach, about 0830, nearing the beach, we could hear the hull scraping over the obstacles and taking machine gun fire. Then we took an 88mm shell hit. The Captain had the situation under control by backing off and going into our second phase. He raised the bunting flag signal for the transport

Chase's LCVP boats as they were returning from the beach to come alongside to unload our troops. The rising tide helped these smaller boats to get through the obstacles.

The 88mm hit penetrated several bulkheads, injuring six soldiers, including two officers. In the interim, the 85 and 93 were lost to the mines. We lost four LCIs out of our ten of Force 0-1.

The LCVPs started to come alongside to pick up the soldiers. We helped the soldiers with their gear on to get into the boats. I was helping a soldier when THUMP! a bullet hit him in the right soldier. A sniper had hit his target. I never got my hands off him, just pulled him back on deck.

The wind had turned the ship along with the tide carrying us into the beach. The Captain saw what was happening and started to turn the ship. The other LCVPs were starting to come in on the other side, which was in the lee of the gun fire. As I went to the port side to direct them to the other side, I came under machine gun fire. Running aft, turning at the deckhouse, I slipped from the blood on the deck, sliding into the aft gun tub with bullets hitting the side of the tub. I still hear the ring of those bullets.

As we finished loading the soldiers into the boats, the last boat pulled away, but it did not go more than 200 yards before it hit a mine and erupting skyward, splintering the boat with shredded bodies on top of the 20 foot water spout. It was all over in seconds. We went over to pick up survivors. There were none.

Later the *Chase* reported six of her boats failed to return; they had become casualties of gun fire, mines, or swamping. The combat demolition group was to clear the channels fifty feet wide through the obstacles and mark the channels for the landing craft. Due to the high surf and fierce gunfire they were killed or drowned, unable to complete their mission. This created the confusion. Boats could not get in, the timing was off and boats were landing at different locations than those assigned. The obstructions consisted of rows of pyramids of heavy steel, timber poles and hedge hogs, many topped with teller mines.

We took our injured soldiers and some survivors we had picked up to the transport *Chase*, now acting as a hospital ship.

AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN: Ensign Lloyd F. Anderson, USNR. 1922–2010

by
Arthur Jaseau, RM2C

LCI(L) 1094

I joined the LCI(L)-1094 in San Diego on March 6, 1945, a last minute replacement of the original Radioman and stayed aboard through Pearl Harbor, Eniwetok, Kwajalein, Guam, Saipan and Iwo Jima. I left her in Guam three months after Japan surrendered. Communications Officer, **Lloyd F Anderson**, Ensign, was my supervisor. My duties were many and varied and when our Quartermaster left our ship half-way through our Pacific campaign I was assigned many of his duties, assisting Ensign Anderson who was also the Navigation Officer. Ensign Anderson was the Gunnery Fire Control Officer during battle action.

The tallest sailor aboard, a handsome blond, Ensign Anderson had a genial nature. It seemed that Mr. Anderson knew most everything. Ask him a question and the answer was immediate, or soon. He always followed up.

He was not 'one of the guys'. He was an officer with responsibilities and duties to perform. He expected us to accept our responsibilities. He gave us the comfortable feeling of a friend and mentor. He called us by our first or last name and we responded with "Sir" or "Mr. Anderson."

I'm sure most LCI's felt that their ship had the best of crews, I am citing a profound individual who shined among a great bunch of officers and enlisted men. As this was my third ship, I had known many other fine men; but Lloyd Anderson had that special "something" that set him apart.

Our collective efforts to run a tight ship kept us always at the ready, keen and prepared. During crucial times of action—typhoons, tsunamis and rescues—there was naturally a palpable tension. There were those times when humor would relieve the tension and buck us up again. Ensign Anderson often would be the one to spontaneously offer some very needed humor that came naturally to him and delivered in his laconic and sort of serious way that made them all the more important and humorous. He wasn't the "funny guy" or irreverent clown.

A few years ago, Mr. Anderson wrote, "The very size of our ship gave us all an opportunity to know each other and we benefitted from the comradeship." This was very evident during our entire voyage.

Except for me, the crew had been together since the ship's christening. I was a last minute replacement, joining the 1094 as it was underway, standing out of San Diego Harbor en route Pearl Harbor. I was brought alongside and I just jumped aboard.

The life of the only LCI radioman, busy and cooped up in the radio room, can be a solitary one. I was OK with this but Mr. Anderson felt that I should be part of the team and made sure I had contact with other crewmen. I soon made many friends with whom I shared ship routines and off-duty friendship.

I came aboard as a RM3c, and during a lull in our island hopping journey, I mentioned to Mr. Anderson that I had been prepping for promotion. Somehow, he soon produced the test papers and had me take the RM2c exam and asked the Executive Officer to be the Proctor. The Captain reviewed my exam, passed it on and I was soon awarded another stripe.

Another time when I happened to mention that I hoped to continue my Forestry college studies, Mr. Anderson told me about the US Armed Forces Institute that offered correspondence courses through the appropriate universities and arranged for me to sign up. The next time we put into port my first lessons were miraculously there awaiting me. I later learned that he also helped others in his command earn their stripes and sign up for USAFI courses.

Our ship was spared the up-close horrors of the War. We did, however, have many close calls especially when, as the Iwo Jima Station Ship, we became involved in the War's final days of defending this valuable, hard fought island.

We first arrived at Iwo with a contingent of Army Troops and landed them on the opposite side of the bloody invasion beaches without encountering enemy fire. The enemy had been fairly subdued and there were only last minute die-hard skirmishes and one daring air raid.

On our raid on nearby Minami Iwo Jima we encountered treacherous seas but no enemy action and captured only one prisoner.



Our biggest danger came from powerful typhoons, storms and swirling seas as we went to the rescue of countless other craft usually involving snarled cables or beach broaching. Often when in heavy seas we transported personnel to and from land and/or other ships or laid smoke screens during many alerts. Each of these maneuvers was carried out with great precision by our well trained crew and Mr. Anderson's navigation skills.

An Army Aircraft Repair Ship, based at Iwo Jima, installed our radio homing device. Mr. Anderson made friends with the Lieutenant and I with the Techs. My new friends gave me some fresh produce: fruit, butter and other staples and my stock, went way up with my shipmates. Mr. Anderson, however, managed to, legitimately, obtain some big stuff: several ship's tanks-full of fresh water, a movie projector, an ice-cream maker, books and recent reading material, the loan of a generator and other goodies.

When we were alongside taking on water, he arranged for us to have a "fresh water shower" so we could finally remove the salt-water crud. We were invited to share their mess. Huge morale boosters!

One task on the 1094 was to sail out to specific coordinates as I operated our homing device whose radio beam guided flak-crippled B-29's returning from Japan to the emergency field on Iwo Jima. We also often rescued several downed B-29 airmen and at night found them through Mr. Anderson's skillful navigation.

We saw his compassion when he learned that one of the young, injured airmen he had been tending to later died. The airman had told Mr. Anderson that "now he could go home and see his wife and young son." His death affected Mr. Anderson deeply. Usually he was smiling and light hearted but for a while he became quiet and pensive. I saw the same compassion exhibited when a member of our ship's crew was injured. He was always there to lend a hand of support. His assistance was also discrete when, in confidence, he helped a crewman write letters home and helped him read those he received. (The crewman later confided this in me.)

When he heard me listening to the Armed Forces Radio playing big-band music, he arranged for the Electrician's Mate and me to pipe the music topside. Occasionally I also patched in the music of Tokyo Rose. (I wonder if the Japanese were aware that we liked hearing Tokyo Rose for the music but ignored her treasonable messages.) Once, for fun, I broadcast some Morse Code I was copying. Somehow the Captain and crew didn't see the humor in this.

After too many close calls, with the Captain's approval, Mr. Anderson thought it wise that I learn more than the rudiments of the Shackle code and for me to know where the code books and instructions were kept so that in case he was unavailable, I could help an officer retrieve them and assist, if asked, to

decode messages. This honor of trust was unprecedented but he knew I would not violate that trust. Happily, I never got the chance.

As the Iwo Jima Station Ship we often went to the rescue of other craft and ships, usually with snarled cables. Mr. Anderson was a champion swimmer and would often join our dive-team to help with the heavy, dangerous work as safety officer.

I often stood shark duty during diving operations with a 30-caliber bolt-action rifle. (This was a dubious action, but it made the divers feel better.) Mr. Anderson once said to me as he prepared to enter the water, "Shoot only the ones with fins!" another time he said "Remember, we're the ones wearing trunks!"

When we were in LSD dry-dock, he also turned-to when all we crewmen became the ship's working party doing repairs.

Early on our voyage, he was entering the radio room and had one foot in the hatch when someone distracted him, he turned, forgot to duck and whacked his head very hard. He slowly came into the room, sat down and, holding his hand to a very large black and blue bump, a bit dazed, he asked, "Now, where were we?"

A couple of times afterward, as he entered the radio room he would carefully come in, right foot first, head ducked very low, slowly rising to his 6' plus height and exclaim, "Well, made it this time!"

One time up in the conning tower, Mr. Anderson handed me the answer to a message I had just brought up. I immediately turned, grabbed the rails to the steep ladder and, as I had often done before, raised my legs to slide down on the rails on my hands. This time, because I had papers in one hand, I flew faster than ever and landed unceremoniously at the bottom on my bottom. It was a bit embarrassing for a hot-shot swabbie. Mr. Anderson, who saw that only my dignity was injured, calmly called down and spoke a refrain from a popular song: "Get right up, dust yourself off, and—don't ever do that again!" It added humor to the situation and for a time some guys would hum that tune when I passed by.

Perhaps in the world today, the few quips I cite here may seem simple and trite, but at those trying times when we were in situations not of our choosing, humor like this was invaluable and important to keep one's morale and drive. He used humor only when it was most appropriate. His bearing, his demeanor, his intelligent manner of leading, showing respect to each person, whether officer or enlisted, is what made him respected and admired.

He was firm when he needed to be. Once he reprimanded me for blinking an "Ahoy" to a former shipmate aboard an LSM as we were busy forming a convoy. On my first time at the flag locker, I hoisted acknowledgment pennants incorrectly, a fact called to our attention by the Flagship. Embarrassed, Mr. Anderson helped me quickly to correct my error. He then took me aside and strongly advised me to not let this happen again. Well, It did happen again! Although I immediately sent up the

proper flags, when we arrived at the next Liberty port Mr. Anderson restricted me to the ship and had me spend some time at the flag bag and diligently studying the Communication and Signals section of the Bluejackets Manual. I never made another wrong flag hoist.

At Iwo Jima we received several cases of beer to distribute among our flotilla for use on shore leave. But, since we were no longer part of a flotilla, we had a lot of happy-juice to ourselves. Mr. Anderson gave me the task of doling out the burpy stuff to those legitimately going on shore leave. All was going great until we took on a contingent of soldiers for a joint island raid. When we returned to Iwo and they had disembarked we discovered that they had found the foamy cache and helped themselves to the whole shebang. Murder was in our beer-lovers' hearts but Mr. Anderson calmed them down with an offer of more suds to come. (He would have done so but he never could; too much war got in the way.)

When I was assigned the Quartermaster's duties, Mr. Anderson, who was also the Navigation Officer, taught me the navigational skills I needed to read and interpret our celestial sightings and how to plot our path on charts. As his immediate co-worker and subordinate working together as Officer and Radioman-Quartermaster, he respected my ability to accomplish my several assignments well and efficiently. He knew he could count on me to follow orders. We had the respect of the crew as a team to be relied on. And, HE was the leader.

On Christmas Eve, 1945, the 1094 was moored in the inner harbor of Guam. I was topside on visual signal duty when Mr. Anderson came up to me and said that he had a special gift for me. I protested that we weren't exchanging gifts; but, he said, he hoped I would forgive him this time and pulling a document from an envelope proceeded to read: "Under authority of ALPAC292-45, ALNAV 44245, the following named enlisted man is to be transferred on 27 December, 1945, to the Guam Separation Center for discharge processing: Jaseau, Arthur, RM2C, 880-69-27

I was going home!

I was speechless. Mr. Anderson said, "I want you to know that I could not have chosen a more accomplished and enthusiastic partner and shipmate. I am going to miss you." He shook my hand. I could only mutter, "Thank you! Thank you!" as I pumped his hand and smiled just as broadly as he was.

Of course, I didn't sleep and the next day as I got my radio room and navigation stuff ready for the next guy, several fellows came to say 'goodbye.' The last one to come in that evening was our Stewards-Mate, Rufus, who brought me a glass of his homemade "Pruno." Finally! Now! I am one of the guys.

The next morning as I was leaving the 1094 forever, I approached Mr. Anderson as he stood near the gangplank and said to him,

"Sir! I will never forget my time aboard the 1094, serving under your command, and going home to my wife and son is the only reason I am happy to be leaving."

We shook hands, and as I stood on the pier I turned and saluted him. He returned my salute with a great big smile.

Late in 2009 I learned of our LCI Association. and immediately joined, hoping to meet-up with my old shipmate. Early in 2010 I got lucky, for **Joe Flynn** gave me Mr. Anderson's address and I instantly wrote him. He was quite ill but his daughter Allison and I corresponded often giving us the opportunity to recount our past 65 years and allowing me to tell his family about our voyage on the 1094 and of the special officer and person he had been to me and my shipmates.

I had planned to visit him and his family, but this was not to be. In September of 2010, Lloyd F. Anderson, Officer, Mentor and Shipmate died at the age of 88.

I am very proud to have served with Lloyd Anderson, Ensign, USNR.

—Arthur Jaseau, RM2C, LCI (L) 1094

Lieutenant Anderson to Receive Full Honors at Arlington National Cemetery

Lieutenant Robert Anderson passed away on September 17, 2010. His daughter, **Allison Baca**, has invited any LCIers who can make it to attend the memorial when his ashes will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery on Wednesday, August 24, 2011, at 3:00 p.m.

Arthur Jaseau, author of the above article writes: "Should any LCIers be able to attend this memorial service it would culminate in the grandest finale for a most deserving Officer and a Gentleman. He truly loved our LCI Association and knew that it was one organization that would give voice to the vital role our Amphibious Navy played in the war."

Please let President **John Cummer** know as soon as possible if you plan to attend. Telephone **803-714-9098**

A Thought from Chaplain Mike Gatton Exalting a Nation



Sir Walter Scott once wrote, “Breathes there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, ‘This is my own, my native land!’” Patriotic feelings come easily and naturally. We say the pledge to the flag with conviction. We fly the flag and sing patriotic songs with enthusiasm. As Sir Walter Scott suggested, it is rare to find someone who does not love his country. But patriotic feelings are not enough. Loving your country is not enough. It takes more than that to be a good citizen.

You see, love of country is good or less than good depending upon the other things we also love. I think that is what Jesus meant when he said, “Seek first the Kingdom of God”. Righteousness is about right relationships—right relationships with God, with self, and with neighbor, but with God always coming first. Get your relationship with God straight, and everything else works out so much better. That was the focal point of Jesus’ entire ministry: put God first. Put God at the center of your life. When you put God first, then everything else of value in life is enhanced, lifted up. Put anything else first, and everything else is devalued as a result. Your marriage, your family, your job, your fulfillment, your happiness—all of that is either enhanced or devalued by whatever it is you love the most.

I think that tells us something important about patriotism. We love our nation best when we make it subservient to the highest values we know. I believe deeply that the stature of a nation is measured by the size of the ideals it serves. Therefore, the person who loves his nation best is that person who insists that his nation be faithful to the best that we know. “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” In other words, the greatest nation will be the nation that serves the demands of righteousness—the nation that reaches for the highest values.

That’s how our nation came into being. The founders of our republic did not organize a government, and then try to decide what kind of government it would be and what it would try to do. No, the government did not come first. Values, ideals, principles came first. After deciding upon those, they set up a government which would serve those ideals.

Listen to these words from the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

Isn’t it abundantly clear from these words that our founders began with certain ideals and values, and that the government was established for the purpose of serving these ideals and values? And, isn’t it also clear that our founders believed that the source of all our highest values is God? The same God who created us and gave us certain rights as a part of the act of creation? God made us free people. And God placed in our hearts a longing to be free. All our highest ideals and all our noblest intentions have come to us from God.

The responsibility placed upon the people of this nation is to live righteously, putting God, and all the values God gives to us, first. Our founders believed that if we live righteously, then God will cause us to prosper. But if not, we can expect trouble. So, in light of that, what kind of people do we want to be? By what values do we want to live? Do we want a nation where profit trumps all other values? Do we want a society in which “getting mine” is all that counts? Do we want a country where security is more important than morality? Do we want a nation that winks at kick-backs and yawns at corruption? Do we want a society of faithlessness in

marriage, coarseness in thought and language, and violence as a way to get things done? Do we want a culture where values are so distorted that things are more important than people, where we pay entertainers and athletes big money, while we underpay teachers and nurses, and resent a minimum wage? Do we want a society in which those who are having a good life become insulated and insensitive to those who are on the outside looking in? What kind of people do we want to be? By what kind of values do we want to live?

What is required of us, as the children of God and as citizens both of this nation and of the world, is to appreciate what is good about this nation without becoming complacent about it. We must be grateful for what is, while at the same time pressing forcefully for greater faithfulness to our covenant with God, increased righteousness in our land.

In order to do all of that, we must be clear about what makes a nation great. Is it gross national product? Is it military power? Is it our standard of living? Is it sophistication of technology? Is it the abundance of entertainment? Is it the level of literacy? What makes a nation great? The scripture says that “righteousness exalts a nation.” What makes a nation great is having the right values - and then living up to them. That’s greatness!

A Frenchman by the name of DeTocqueville said it this way well over a hundred years ago: “I sought for the greatness of America in her harbors and rivers and fertile fields, and her mines and commerce. It was not there. Not until I went into the churches and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the greatness of her power. America is great because she is good; and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great!”

Do you believe that? I do.

Abraham Lincoln believed it too. During the worst part of the Civil War, a person came to Lincoln and said, “I surely hope the Lord is on our side.” In his wisdom, Lincoln replied, “I am not at all concerned about that, for I know that the Lord is always on the side of the right; but it is my constant anxiety and prayer that both I and this nation should be on the Lord’s side.”

Lincoln loved this nation best because he loved righteousness even more. That’s the right kind of patriotism; because, above all else, it is righteousness that exalts a nation!

Prayer:

Loving God, our Father, we give You thanks for our nation and for all the blessings it affords to each of us. We are grateful for the sacrificial efforts of those who came before us, and for the gifts of freedom and abundance handed down to us at great cost. Help us now to be more worthy of those gifts. Help us to love our nation wisely, helpfully, creatively, by loving even more the righteousness that comes from You. In your righteous name we pray. Amen

Agape, Mike



IN MEMORIAM

*“Almighty and eternal God, from whose love we cannot be parted, either by death or life;
hear our prayers and thanksgiving for those whom we here remember.”*
*“Grant unto sorrowing family and shipmates the blessing
of your peace that passes understanding.”*

LCI 22
Melmoth Rivers

LCI 214
Ted Ponseti

LCI 354
Robert B. Rearick

LCI 360
Bernard B. Flint

LCI 407
David W. Little

LCI 426
John Kershaw

LCI 439
John B. Atcherson

LCI 454
Bernard W. Wenrich

LCI 456
L. L. McCormick

LCI 464
William Wertz

LCI 465
Louis L. McCormick

LCI 515
Wesley F. Davis

LCI 536
Earl H. Gillette

LCI 555
Lewis W. Moyle

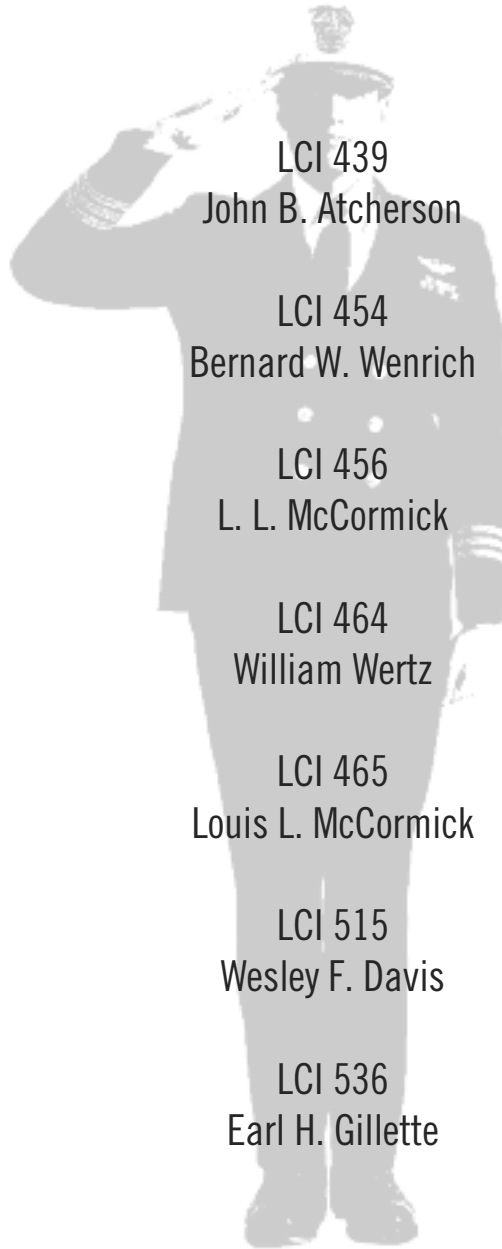
LCI 577
Lloyd A. Beary

LCI 624
Ivan E. Mentzer

LCI 686
Robert H. Bolthouse

LCI 1026
Kenneth W. Martz

LCI 1083
Jack Moses





LCI(L) 484 plays host to a group of correspondents as D-Day nears.



Chet Collom's Navy Duty

May 22, 1945 to August 20, 1946

Here's an account of a kind of duty most of us did not have—Post World War II duty aboard an LCI

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941, I was living in Glendale, California with my family. I went on to Junior High School. On May 22, 1945, I joined the Navy and went to boot camp in San Diego. I had boot leave in August and on my 18th birthday, August 6, the U.S. dropped the first atom bomb on Hiroshima. Returning to San Diego, I was moved to San Bruno, California, to receive amphibious training for the invasion of Japan.

After the Japanese surrender, I arrived in Tokyo in September and was assigned to a communications base in Kure, 17 miles from Hiroshima where I became a signalman striker.

Transferred again to Yokosuka and assigned to the LCI-L 1097, where I met the crew of 20 men and 3 officers. I asked **Captain Gross** to be signalman striker and was told they needed a quartermaster. I agreed and started studying for the grade.

We took on stores, made a "Going Home Banner," one foot in length for each crew member returning. We were set to sail back to the States when we were told of a huge earthquake in Alaska and we needed to move the craft to the middle of Tokyo Bay to watch for a tidal wave. As an 18 year old Seaman, Second Class, there I was standing watch for a tidal wave! I had no idea how high it would be! Or what to do if it did hit! It never came.

The next day we sailed out of Tokyo into a huge typhoon for three days. As long as I was on the helm I was OK—not seasick but otherwise in the sack was the only safe place. When on the helm the power steering failed, and I was ordered to the aft steering in the bilge area taking orders to port and starboard to keep the ship heading straight into the waves as a broadside wave could capsize us!

We sailed the 1097 from Tokyo to Eniwetok where we anchored off shore. I made a sketch of the atoll which I still have. Then it was on to Honolulu. The sailing from Honolulu to San Diego took two weeks at four knots. We stayed in San Diego, where I was just two hours from home. In August we sailed to Acapulco where we had to stop to fix the galley's refrigerator. Next it was through the Panama Canal and on to New Orleans where I received my Quartermaster 3c rating.

The ship was sent up the Mississippi River for decommissioning and I went on to Norman, Oklahoma, for discharge from the Navy.

Chester (Chet) Collom
20102 Lemarsh St.
Chatsworth CA 91311
818 993-8716

Thai Navy Scuttles Former LCIs

We are indebted to Arthur Jaseau, who served on LCI(L) 1094, for this information concerning the scuttling of two LCIs that have been in service in the Thai Navy until just this year. Arthur wrote as follows:

Many former LCI sailor may wonder what became of their ship after the war. Looking in the Navy Registry gives me a rather sad feeling of the Navy's candid and terse statement of the disposal of our once proud Ships.

I remember one morning, in 1948, reading in the *LA Times* Shipping News that my ship, the former LCI 1094, was docked in San Pedro Harbor, Los Angeles, California just in from South America. I hurried down to the harbor but I was too late. She had sailed out with the early tide. Hugely disappointed, I had hoped that I might be allowed to come aboard and visit my former home. I later learned that the 1094 now belonged to an outfit that fished off the water of Peru, mostly for tuna. I never heard of her again.

Recently I found internet stories and films of the sinking of two former US Navy LCIs now belonging to Thailand's Navy. The two LCIs were sunk in the ocean to form reefs and become underground sanctuary for sea life. Now at least a few Elsie Eye vets can see how their ships are now serving a noble purpose:

On May 21, 2011—The Thai Navy's HTMS *Prab*, LCI 741, formerly the USS LCI (L) 670, was sunk off the Island of Ngam Noi, Thailand.

On June 18, 2011—The Thai Navy's HTMS *Sattakut*, LCI 742, formerly the USS LCI (G) 739, was sunk off the Island of Koh Tao, Thailand.

More information, photos and film of the sinkings may be obtained at: The Wild Planet-Thailands Adventure Specialists, Sinking of the HTMS *Sattakut*, LCI 742 and at www.bangkokpost.com/news/local/238015/htms-prab-downs-to-seabed



Walter John Siek, MoMM3c, USS LCI(L) 812, Belatedly Honored for Heroism!

It was a labor of love for **Hal Bleyhl**, former Commanding Officer of **USS LCI(L) 812**, and LCI Association Treasurer, to see that one of his heroic shipmates finally won the honor he so richly deserved.

Through the efforts of Hal, LCI Association Historian **Dennis Blocker** and others, the heroic act of **Walter John Siek** in giving his life for his shipmates has been finally recognized. Recently, **Christine V. Shaner**, Siek's niece, received word that her uncle had been posthumously awarded The Navy and Marine Corp Medal for Heroism in recognition of actions he took on July 12, 1945.

The medal citation letter from the Secretary of the Navy reads as follows:

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL posthumously to
MOTOR MACHINIST'S MATE THIRD CLASS
WALTER J. SIEK
UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following CITATION:
For heroism while serving aboard USS Landing Craft Infantry (Large) 812 on 12 July 1945. During the ship's transit from Okinawa to Hawaii, a ruptured oil line sprayed oil all over the engine room and caught fire, threatening the survival of the vessel and its crew. Alone on duty in the engine room at the time, Petty Officer Siek, with complete disregard for his own safety, instinctively sprang into action to save the ship. Realizing that the engines would continue to spray oil and fuel the fire, he hurriedly and expertly shut down the two generators and all 8 diesel engines. This also forced the vessel to drift to a stop, thereby enabling the crew to employ the handy billy pump to extinguish the fire. By having bravely remained below to save the ship and his 27 shipmates, Petty Officer Siek was 'completely engulfed in flames. By the time he exited the engine room onto the deck, his upper torso was severely burned. He was transferred to the USS *PRENTISS* for medical treatment and evacuation to Pearl Harbor, but succumbed to his injuries on 20 July 1945 and was buried at sea with full military honors. By his courageous and prompt actions in the face of great personal risk, Petty Officer Siek reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service
For the President of the United States

[signed] Ray Helms,
Secretary of the Navy



Christine messaged her thanks to those who had helped her uncle receive this belated recognition of his heroism in the following entry on our LCI web site guestbook:

"In the memory of my Uncle, Walter John Siek MOMM3/C USNR aboard the LCI(L)812 during WWII. He lost his life in a fire aboard the ship.

"On behalf of Walter's family, I would like to especially thank **Harold (Hal) Bleyhl**, **Jessie "the Preach" Essinger**, **Charles E. Millet**, and Historian, **Dennis Blocker** for their efforts from May 2009 until May 2011 in obtaining the Navy and Marine corps Medal for Heroism in recognition for his actions on July 12, 1945.

"This is a special organization and I can't be prouder to have had the honor and pleasure of working with Hal. After 66 years it's just an honor to accept this medal on behalf of my uncle.

"God Bless to all Veterans and their service to our country. It's wonderful to have this site to learn more about our WWII vets."

Hal Blyehl, our Association Treasurer who monitors the web site, responded:

"I too want to thank Dennis for digging up Christine's name and address and Jessie and Charlie for being the necessary two witnesses. We were down to the wire on this requirement, as Jessie has since passed a couple of months ago. Marilyn, I am sure he knows it.

"I thank the Congressman and his assistant **Alberto Velasco** for the work he did and the necessary follow thru.

"This medal is a relatively new medal that was started during WWII and ranks between the Bronze and Silver Star as to importance."

"At last victory, and persistence does pay off," said Hal. "We started this exactly two years ago when I talked to Dennis at the Portland convention. Dennis was able to find some relatives for me. It was not easy, and we finally got the paper work in the right form which was not hard. The problem was that it was usually six months between exchanges or answers from the bureau.

"Unless you are a relative, you are at a dead end which I found out after a year had passed. We finally went through the relatives and their congressman to get it done.

"I am told that this non combat medal ranks between the bronze star and silver star in importance."

Bravo Zulu, Hal, Dennis, and everyone else who worked for this! A job well done."

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

If you served aboard an LCI during WWII, are a relative of someone who served aboard an LCI, or if you just have a desire to have a part in remembering those who so served, you are invited to join our association.

Please complete this form and mail it to the address indicated below with your first year's dues.

DUES ARE \$25.00 PER YEAR, June 1 through May 31.
Membership includes a subscription to *Elsie Item*, our quarterly publication.

I. For application if you served on an LCI:

Name _____
Which LCI did you serve on? _____ What was your Rank/Rate? _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Date of Birth: _____ Phone #: _____/_____
E-mail address: _____
Occupation or Former Occupation: _____
Wife's Name _____

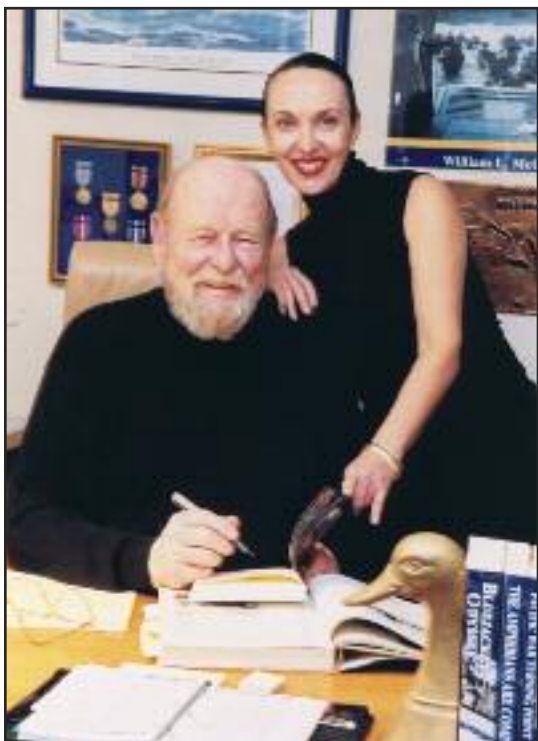
II. For Application if you did not serve on an LCI:

Name _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Date of Birth: _____ Phone #: _____/_____
Are you related to someone who served on an LCI? Yes No
If so, what is the relationship? (i.e. father, grandfather, uncle, etc) _____
What is/was his name? _____
On which LCI did he serve? _____
Have you served in the U.S. military? Yes No If so, what branch? _____

Please send this application with your check (\$25) made payable to
USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION to:

USS LCI National Association
c/o Nehemiah Communications, Inc.
101 Rice Bent Way, Unit #6

ACCLAIMED MILITARY HISTORIAN DONATES FILES TO NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR



*Military historian William L. McGee
and his wife, Sandra
Photo by Joanne A. Calitri International)*



*The National Museum of the Pacific War, Fredericksburg, Texas
(Photo courtesy of the National Museum of the Pacific War)*

Just as we were going to press we received the following press release concerning William McGee, author and former 'Gator sailor. Bill was the speaker at our banquet at the Portland Reunion two years ago. We know you will be interested in this news.

San Francisco, CA, July 18, 2011 –The National Museum of the Pacific War (formerly The Admiral Nimitz Museum) in Fredericksburg, Texas has added the research and writing files of military historian William L. McGee to the Museum archives.

The Museum was selected by McGee for its “dedication to perpetuating the memory of the Pacific Theater of WWII in order that the sacrifices of those who contributed to our victory may never be forgotten.” (For more on the Museum, visit www.PacificWarMuseum.org.)

“The William L. McGee Research and Writing Files” consist of archival materials collected by McGee over a twenty-year period as research material for four books on World War II military history in the Pacific.

The archival materials consist of ship deck logs, Action Reports, interviews and oral histories, documentation on the 1946 Bikini atomic bomb tests (McGee participated in these tests.), rolls of microfilm and microfiche, and hundreds of photographs. There is also an extensive collection of WWII books.



Dennis Blocker explains the filing system of the archival material to museum staff members

Dennis Blocker II, Pacific war historian for the USS LCI (Landing Craft, Infantry) National Association (www.usslci.com), created a detailed inventory of all the materials. “This project was an honor for me,” said Blocker. “William McGee’s materials are a treasure trove and will be a huge asset to The Pacific War Museum’s efforts to become a world-class WWII research facility.”

Books by William L. McGee include the acclaimed Pacific war trilogy:

AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC IN WORLD WAR II

Vol. I, THE AMPHIBIANS ARE COMING! EMERGENCE OF THE ‘GATOR NAVY AND ITS REVOLUTIONARY LANDING CRAFT

Vol. II, THE SOLOMONS CAMPAIGNS, 1942-1943 FROM GUADALCANAL TO BOUGAINVILLE, PACIFIC WAR TURNING POINT

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