

LST 534

Documentary Newsletter

April, 1998

Volume 1, Issue 2

ODDS AND ENDS

Does anyone have a copy of the 1945 issue of the New York Times showing the LST burning away in Okinawa?

Also, what can you guys tell me about the 74th Army Field Hospital? Mr. Drew told me the wounded were taken there after the Kamikaze Attack.

Okinawa News coming out of Okinawa.. Hear about it next issue

Update by Linda Alvers, RN, MSN

Everything is moving along as planned for the LST 534 documentary. Since our last newsletter dated January, 1998 we have been busy finding more shipmates, recording a few more guys and doing lots of research.

My camera man Matthew Wachsmann (Matt), accompanied me to Wilmington, NC on January 31st to videotape Norris Long, Quartermaster .

It was a real treat to hear Norris recapture his experience on board the 534. For those of you who don't know this, Norris found his 8mm film reels, sent them to me for video conversion and now we have actual footage of life on board the 534. Norris also has possession of the Commissioning Flag, so we can "wave it" on the documentary.

Taping stopped for a while right after Norris because Michael (my editor) and I had to read *all* of the transcripts and log all of the video so we would know what we had and what we didn't have. That took us about 6 weeks. When we finished, we had a real sense of what to ask the next group of interviewees.

On March 27th , Matt and I drove to Poughkeepsie, New

York to video tape Spencer James. He was a radioman on board. What a wonderful day. The weather was warm and sunny and Spencer has a convertible! He couldn't wait for us to get the interview over with so he and Mrs. James could go for a ride with the top down. Spencer has a small model of an LST and he walked us through from the bow to the stern.

The next day, Sunday, March 28th, we set up in my office in New York City and invited Andy Cumella and his wife Rose to the "studio". Andy was the storekeeper on board in the Atlantic and Pacific. How many of you realize that Andy was one of the last shipmates assigned to protect the LST 534 and he actually saw it being sunk off Okinawa. My Mom came over to meet Mr. and Mrs. Cumella and they sat in the "Green Room" and watched Andy give me a stunning interview.

Thanks to these guys and their wives and families for helping me with the documentary.

We've shifted to high gear in the production process of our documentary. So far we've interviewed 10

original crew members, using up about 50 half-hour tapes. We're planning about a dozen more interviews in various locations across the country over the next few weeks.

Next issue hear about Florida, Iowa and Washington State.

Also in the works is a trip to Evansville, Indiana, former site of the Evansville Shipyard and the birthplace of the LST 534. We'll be talking with local experts and residents about the shipyard's brief history, the launching of the 534 and interesting details about LST's. One of our stops will be the Evansville Museum, whose collection includes thousands of historic photos related to the shipyard, lots of fascinating memorabilia and an impressive scale model of an LST.

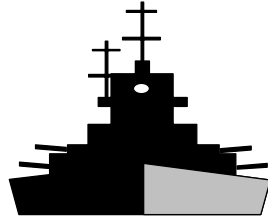
The editing process for the documentary has already begun. While meticulously sifting through 416 pages of transcripts (so far), we've come to realize the hardest part; narrowing it all down to less than an hour. Your interviews are all so good, it's hard to decide what will stay and what will end up on the cutting room floor. But don't worry —all shipmate interviewees will be included somewhere in the program.

We'll keep you posted about the still-untitled production - truly a "labor of love"!

WANTED! Letters And Photographs

Our program may include a brief segment on letters to and from wives, girlfriends and families of crew members. Can you help us out? Love letters, poems, descriptions of life at sea, or just everyday letters to keep in touch, anything you want to share, as long as it was written during the war. Even journals or diaries may be helpful. If you can't part with your originals we will settle for a copy. A few excerpts from letters would add a nice, personal touch to the stories of life aboard the LST 534. Please send your submissions as soon as possible, or call (1-800-237-1224) to tell us what you have.

We have no pictures of Captain Olson or Captain French who served aboard the 534 in the Atlantic and Pacific Theaters respectively. If you have any please let us know. Even the smallest snapshot would be helpful. Or perhaps you may have ideas on where to look or who to call. Any suggestions will be appreciated and of course, all letters and photographs will be returned.



Track That Ship

Oops...there is one correction from our first issue. Seems I wrote down "from the Ohio to the Miss. Rivers" and Miss. was thought to be Missouri.

The correction reads, "We know that the LST 534 was built in Evansville, Indiana and sailed down the Ohio River to the Mississippi River". On January 31, 1944 in New Orleans, the commissioning took place. Then lots of practice maneuvers in Pensacola, Florida. After loading up, the LST 534 headed North on March 7, 1944 in a convoy. Captain Olson thought the convoy wasn't going fast enough and requested permission to speed along independently. Permission granted!!!

Get Well Wishes

You know how good it feels to get cards and thoughts when you are ill. So let's reach out to the guys that aren't feeling good. Send Get Well cards often.

James Drew
290 Semicircle Dr.
Demorest, GA 30535

John Cain
536 Barbados St.
Norristown, PA 19401

Birthdays May - July

May 17
Duncan Robey
8301 Tieton Drive #87
Yakima, WA 98908

May 19
Alpheus A. Deville
50 Deville Cutoff Rd,
Deville, LA 71328

June 6
James Drew
290 Semicircle Drive
Demorest, GA 30535

June 11
Bill McAndrew
P.O. Box 781546
Wichita, KS 67278-1546

June 15
Jim Sarres
3650 Shangrila Rd.
Oshkosh, WI 54904

June 16
Lawrence Killian
Rural Route 4
Dallas, PA 18612

June 17
Spencer James
40 Fulton Ave.
Poughkeepsie, NY
12603

NAME THAT DOCUMENTARY

We have had several shipmates give ideas for the title of the documentary

.....

The Bow

Doors

.....

Let's Serve

Together

....

Something

Watching

Over Us

....

Keep 'em

coming,

please!

Views From the Better Half

This section received no response, so we will not keep it active.

REUNION

I really haven't had time to work on the reunion.

Thanks to the people who offered to help - don't worry, we'll use it. But I plan to focus on the reunion when I finish the road trip of interviews.

The Locator Service

Heh, you guys are great! So many of you sent in your latest information on shipmates and it really helps. This issue we are concentrating on the alphabet from J – P.

J THROUGH P

Amos Jack	Henry E. Leidy	William H. Most
James Jazwinski	Johnnie M. Lemons	John R. Nance
Richard J. Jeanguenat	Raymond E. Lemery	Antonio Neves
Fred L. Jenkins	Lawrence Leonard	Richard E. Nitsche
Henry W. Jennings	Richard L. Leonard	George B. Olson
Wayne Jens	Paul F. Leuck	Donald T. O'Neill
Bobby E. Jensen	Thomas F. Long	Anthony R. Paolera
Francis Hiram Jones	Donald E. Long	Michael R. Pasocello
Niels Jorgensen	Larry W. Lord	John Piznak
Owen Keating, Jr.	Robert E. Macanlar	Thomas P. Parker
Franklin G. Keiter	John Mack	Harry H. Pennington
Robert L. Keller	Donald J. Maison	Benjamin I. Platt
Paul M. Kilgore	Pierino J. Marrama	David W. Pollock
Sylvester R. Kilgore	Douglas Owen Mapes	James Nelson Potter
George F. Kinyone	Patsy Matrale	Sammie W. Porter
Paul Klein	Donald E. McDaniel	John F. Powers
Frank W. Keotter	Dale O. McClellan	John S. Primmer
Lester Kluck	William A. Milesoskey	Anthony J. Puccio
Theodore Landhauser	Robert S. Mitchell	Richard Lee Pullens
Roland J. LeDoux	James H. Miller	Myron W. Pully, Jr.
Earl B. Leidy	John Thacher Morris	Next Issue
	David B. Morris	R Z

Nautical Terms

By James Richard Drew

Pollywog:

Sailor who has never passed the International Dateline

Dragonback:

Sailor becomes a qualified Dragonback having gone through the ceremony officially crossing the International Dateline

Documentary Crew Names To Remember

Michael Wilson – Editor, Co-Producer

Matt Wachsman – ENG unit/Cameraman

Tom Cummings – ENG and Researcher

Kandy Steinfurth – Newsletter Producer

Edie Hutchins – Primary Transcriber

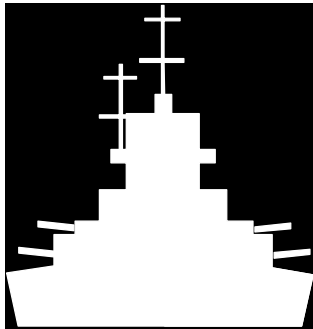
Allen Merritt – Backup Transcriber

Ron Pobuda – Talent Coordinator

Cindy Alvers Zarate – Online Research

Onita Brown – National Archives Research

LST 534 Documentary Newsletter
62 W 62nd Street
Apt. 26B
New York, New York 10023



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Just for Fun

is a column meaning just that - FUN. Jim Sarres has graciously volunteered to keep this column going. We all know how Judge Sarres can keep us laughing!

Thanks Jim.

JUST FOR FUN

JOKES FROM JIM

The army has stopped drafting married men - no fight left in them.

I'm old, the only hot number in my black book is the fire department.

I had a bad Christmas last year, I stood under the mistletoe until Easter.

I want my kids to have all the things I could never afford, then I want to move in with them.

Sickness comes in three stages - ill, pill and bill!

Send all newsletter correspondence to:
Linda Alvers
62 W 62nd Street
Apt. 26B
New York, NY 10023
1-800 237-1224