

LST534

Documentary Newsletter

June, 1998

Volume 1, Issue 3

ODDS AND ENDS

Don't forget to send get well wishes to those who need us.



LST534 Reunion Sept 4-5, Washington, DC

We have a host/narrator for the documentary - a most impressive figure.

Look for clues and see if you can figure out who he is.



Update by Linda Alvers, RN, MSN

How often can a person fly into Florida, meet new friends, greet old friends and have lasting memories? That's just what happened on April 4th & 5th when the videotaping took us to beautiful, peaceful Tampa - at the Hyatt Regency. The guys in the area of Tampa decided to use the weekend for a little mini reunion, consequently we gathered Luther Lyles, Oscar and Helen Cress, Edgar and Aldine Overstake and Johnny and Dottie Medeiros. Ed Holt and his wife Gussie were planning to attend but couldn't make it.

On Saturday, April 4th we taped Luther Lyles. Luther was a S1c on the ship in the Pacific Theater. Being a guy from a small town - Dublin, Georgia, Luther couldn't believe the size of the LST534. Not long after his boarding, they went through the international dateline. What a story that was - grease and oil and anything else they could find and dump into a tarpaulin. You would strip down, get paddled, get your hair shaved & jump in the grease and oil. Luther said it took hours to clean up.

Luther also talked about getting punished on board (he wouldn't tell us exactly what happened.) But he did say he was the only guy in the world

who went to the brig on bread & water and gained two pounds!

Luther, some of you call him Curtis, apparently had a head full of red hair some fifty plus years ago. Once said, everyone immediately remembered him. Luther drove over an hour each way on both Saturday and Sunday. We owe him a debt of gratitude as he was certainly an important part of the Florida reunion.

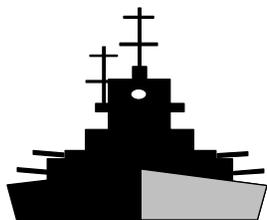
Sunday morning Oscar Cress sat in front of the lights. Oscar was a gunners' mate third class and served on the LST534 for 22 months. Oscar told us about going to France on D-day and they had spaghetti to eat for dinner - the Army troops on board got so seasick, there was spaghetti everywhere on deck! Oscar told us about one guy, John Cain, who told the Captain to turn the boat around, he wanted to go home. Oscar wrote this poem while standing watch one night :

*Some sweet day
We will win our way
From the cliffs of Dover
To the USA,
Then we ll get on our knees and pray
That there ll never be another day
That we will have to fight our way
From the cliffs of Dover to the USA
So far away .*

Today, Oscar and his lovely wife Helen manage a home for some eighteen mentally challenged people. Thanks to Oscar and Helen for their love and dedication to these handicapped people.

Mid morning on Sunday we got Ed Overstake in front of the camera. Ed is the only shipmate I have interviewed so far who says he loves the Navy and would go back on the LST534 today if he could. Ed was a signalman on board in the Pacific and when I asked him to pretend he had flags in his hands, he immediately signaled "LST534". Ed told us great stories about life on the Conn! He was signaling the night of one of the typhoons and when the small boats in the harbor would ask to tie up to the LST534 - he signaled back "Get out of the way! We're out of control!" Ed said that was a very scary night. After college and working in the accounting field for awhile, he became an officer in the Salvation Army and had 36½ wonderful years helping and guiding others.

Johnny Medeiros, along with his wife Dottie and the other wives, watched the interviews from the green room. The good news, we finished in time to all enjoy lunch together. Thanks you guys - for a job well done.



**OKINAWA
LST534 FOUND!**

By Tom Cummings

Throughout the process of planning the LST534 documentary, I have been handed several interesting assignments. The latest one was no exception...

One day, Linda called me up and said, "Tom, find the LST534. We're going to dive for her and get some great video footage." To which I responded, "Aye, Captain!" (Is that a naval term?)

I began my search on the internet. I searched under "scuba diving/Okinawa", hoping to find some divers that may be familiar with the wreckage. The results pointed to about a dozen sites that matched the criteria. Email was sent to everyone on the list. I explained about the documentary and that we were trying to find the ship. I received four responses – two enlisted navy men stationed in Okinawa and two ex-navy men who returned from Okinawa in recent years. These four guys were great! They all immediately began researching dive maps for the ship. Unfortunately, after much work and correspondence, no one had turned up much.

I then refocused my search on LST and naval-specific topics (be sure to check the list at the end of the article). I happened upon the US Navy Website, which in turn, pointed me to the US Naval Library Website. The Library site had a tremendous amount of information, but nothing specifically on the 534 or its location.

I found a telephone number on the site and gave it a try. After explaining what I was looking for to about six different people, I was transferred to someone in the Ship History Department. This man calmly walked to a card file and proceeded to tell me the location where the 534 was scuttled!

The location is:

- Latitude:** 26 degrees, 8 min, 34 seconds – North
- Longitude:** 128 degrees, 0 min., 23 seconds – East
- Depth:** 300 fathoms

I then contacted my friends in Okinawa via the Internet and had them check the coordinates against recent topographic maps. Unfortunately, they confirmed that the 534 was resting in 1200-1800 feet of water...This depth makes diving extremely difficult and very expensive. Well, we don't know if we will ever get to dive for the 534, but we have been discussing the possibility of going to Okinawa to add a kind of "Then & Now" piece to conclude the documentary.

I would like to send a special thanks to Yeoman Willie Gunn for his suggestions and consultation in this endeavor. If you get a chance, check out some of the websites I found throughout my search:

www.history.navy.mil
(US Navy)

tlc.library.net/ndl
(Naval Library)

www.abiz4me.com/1st.html
(official LST website)

Home.pacbell.net/hughes/home.htm
(LST Association/California)

www.glue.umd.edu/~enola/history.html
(Pacific War History)

www.usni.org
(US Naval Institute)

www.modelersboatyard.com
(Order plans to scale of model ships)



CLUE

**Graduated from
Tulane University**

NAME THAT
DOCUMENTARY

LST534

The Steel
Connection



Sailing Into
History



Stronger
than Steel

How many trips did the LST534 make across the English Channel?

Answer next time!

REUNION

Sign up for the US LST534 Association meeting for \$40.00 and attend the LST534 reunion for free. You will have to get a hotel room.

For details call Linda Gunjak at 1-800-228-5870.

The LST534 reunion is Sept 4th and 5th. More details to follow.

Track that Ship

The LST534 arrived in New York Harbor on March 15th, 1944. It spent a week or so in and around New York getting provisioned.

On March 21st at 1223, the LST534 left New York Harbor to Bayonne, NJ for degaussing then to Long Island Sound then Rhode Island to Cape Cod Canal then to Boston Harbor on March 24th. Then assumed position in a convoy heading toward Halifax, Nova Scotia. Arrived Nova Scotia on March 27th, 1944. On March 29th the LST534 departed Halifax in a convoy position 15 changing course and speed to maintain position in convoy. They reached icy waters and the convoy dispersed to maneuver through ice fields.

The Locator Service

OK you guys this is the last of the alphabet R to Z.

R THROUGH Z

William B. Ray
 Kenneth Edward Rhine
 Frederick J. Ritter
 Julius Glenwood Rosser
 Aaron P. Safrit
 Woodrow L. Scarborough
 Samuel Scott
 Haywood Session
 Irvin W. Shankwitz
 Walter Allan Shirks
 George William Singleton
 Pierce E. Snow
 Milton S. Smith
 Salvatore S. Spetts
 Albert Straka
 Jack H. T. Spencer, Sr.

Stephen George St. Laurent
 James B. Swayne
 Earl P. Swenson
 Hershel O. Tate
 Nathan Thomas
 Mozell Tolbert
 Robert Van Hooser
 Kenneth G. Wamsher
 Garfield E. Walker
 Joseph W. Wall
 Edward Wasolosky
 Alvin E. Watson
 Romie F. Williamson
 Truman E. Wood
 John W. Wright
 Earl Hamilton Young
 James L. Zachary

Birthdays

Well, don't know how it happened but the following birthdays were listed wrong. I'm so sorry. Let's get it right. Corrections are:

July 6
 James Richard "Dick"
 Drew
 290 Semicircle Drive
 Demorest, GA 30535

July 11
 Bill McAndrew
 P.O. Box 781546
 Wichita, KS
 67270-1546

July 13
 Jim Sarres
 3650 Shangri La Road
 Oshkosh, WI 54904

July 16
 Lawrence Killian
 Rural Route 4
 Dallas, PA 18612

July 17
 Spencer James
 40 Fulton Ave
 Poughkeepsie, NY
 12603

Also having a birthday
 In July:

July 18
 Harold Makinster
 1132 19th Ave
 Longview, WA 98632

Get Well Wishes

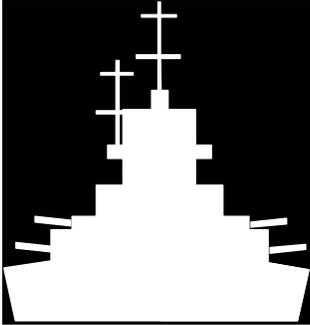
John Shipe, EM3c
 3916 Boyds Bridge Pike
 Holsten Health Care
 Room 204B
 Knoxville, TN 37914



CLUE

Born in 1914

LST534 Documentary Newsletter
62 W 62nd Street
Apt. 26B
New York, New York 10023



LST534

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JUST FOR FUN

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.

Jokes From Jim

I have so many liver spots. I should come with a side of onions.

What happens when you cross an oyster and an owl you get pearls of wisdom.

I have a military figure, most of it goes to the front.

Nautical Terms

By James Richard Drew

Plank Owners-
Those men who were first on the ship.

Field Day -
General House Cleaning



CLUE

Born in
Ferriday, Louisiana

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