

LST534 Newsletter

November, 1998

Volume 1, Issue 7



Holiday Issue by Linda Alvers, RN, MSN



This issue of the newsletter, I am transcribing Mr. Howard K. Smith's comments that he made when he addressed the reunion attendees. His words are so profound that I thought you would all enjoy reading them.

A special surprise is also enclosed as a little gift from me to you – color copies of two different pictures. The top one is me standing by my Dad's Memorial table at the reunion. The bottom one is the shipmates who attended the reunion. They are:

Top row-left to right: Oscar Cress, Luther Lyles, Frank Frame, William Dox, Larry Gray, and Willie Gunn. Seated-left to right: Duncan Robey, Norris Long, Alex Fielder, Johnny Medeiros, Andy Cumella, Lyle Kingsbury, and Jim Sarres.

This is the last issue of the LST534 Newsletter for 1998. 1999 will begin with Volume II, Issue 1. Thanks to all of you who have supported me and this project. I will be thinking of each of you as the holidays go by.

Season Greetings to all of you!

Mr. Howard K. Smith
(September 5, 1998)

I am very happy to be here with you tonight but come to think of it at my age I am very happy to be anywhere upright at night. I have reached the stage George Burns' mentioned when he said you really know you are getting on when you lean over to tie your shoelace and then decide to look around for something else to do while you are still down there. Linda has given us one of these shirts now. I am inclined to say I don't deserve the honor, but I have a backache I don't deserve either so these things work themselves out. I was pleased and honored to have a part in the retelling of your story. It is a fascinating story. It is also an important story. I think you have a very distinctive place in the history of the twentieth century.

I am a historian by profession, a current historian, and I see the twentieth century as a strange combination of an utterly miserable first half century and highly favorably second half and you form the nexus

between the two. The first half century was a bummer in every respect. It was probably one of the worst half centuries ever. More people I am sure were killed in its two wars than in any half century in history. Twenty million in World War I, forty million in World War II. The great depression in between just sucked the morale out of the whole world. It was more world wide than the wars were and helped to install in power the people of violence and hatred in Germany and Japan. They were weak at first but then two mental delinquencies of the first half century helped them to get strong. In America, isolationism, the view that it is the front end of the ship that is sinking, stay out of it, lock yourself in your cabin, you will be alright. And in Europe, appeasement, the view if you feed the monster with his little neighbors he will leave us alone. Backing away from history that way allowed Hitler to accomplish very favorable positions for starting the biggest war ever. Then came the middle of the century and

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then everything turned very good. The decisions made were outstandingly good. I think hard times in the first half created a new century of American leaders who are more creative than any leaders we have had since the founding fathers.

The Truman Doctrine was a statement that isolationism was ended in America. We were a part of the world. We would help protect any nation menaced by its aggressive neighbors. It also laid the groundwork for outlasting the Russians in the cold war and in the end put an end to the second great totalitarian trouble of this century. The Marshall Plan really saved Europe. I don't think Americans realized how badly off Europe was. I lived there then and they simply couldn't get off the mat. Two wars had done them in. The Marshall Plan enabled them within four years to get back on track to become more prosperous than they had been before the war. And the NATO Alliance, another initiative by America taught nations that had had the habit of settling their problems with wars every thirty or forty years, it taught them to work together and to solve problems by integration and unity. And they have been doing it. Europe is in better shape than it has ever been. The number of democracies in the world has multiplied. When World War II began there were

only twelve in the world and most of them were on the shores of the North Atlantic Ocean. Both Sides. And last year the Freedom House, a think tank in New York City, counted and they have very stringent requirements, counted one hundred and seventeen democracies in the world from twelve. Germany and Japan were looked upon as hopeless pretty much in World War II. Wondering whether we should just destroy the nations and do away with them. Well we didn't. We cooperated with them. It was largely our work that helped them become very genuine democracies. Germany and Japan. Prosperous democracies. I don't think they could have been much better off if they had won the war and supporters of peace in the world. A very great achievement.

Well all these things happened because people got tired of the way things were going. They decided to learn from history and they created armies that could go back in Europe and in the Pacific and displace the dictators and set up a new set of standards which worked very well indeed. The crucial point I think was Normandy. They would have been going on step by step in the Pacific. Where the rubber hits the road. The soldiers who were to change the world got out of the water and landed on the hostile shores and eventually won. And that is

where you were and no one else could have done it. Couldn't have done it with any other vessels. As I point out in this program Hitler tried to invade Britain. Couldn't. Didn't have the ships. The ships he had broke up and sank in the turbulent waters of the North Sea. The ships hadn't been invented. They were invented in your time and you were the people that got the soldiers there.

It is a little late, a half a century late, but congratulations and thank you very much.

Facts

Celebrities who served in the Navy in WWII:

Paul Newman	gunner & radioman
Robert Stack	gunnery instructor
Kirk Douglas	communications officer
Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.	deck officer
Tony Curtis	boiler room, submarine
Ernest Borgnine	gunner's mate
Henry Fonda	air combat intelligence
Rock Hudson	aircraft mechanic

Source: Stars in Blue
(Naval Institute Press 1997)

Next Issue: Rental Library

The next issue will have all of the information about renting the video tape interviews and the deck logs.

STAY TUNED!!

Selling the Show

At this point we have the show being reviewed by three entities:

PBS

The History Channel and

The Learning Channel

It takes time for these program directors to review tapes as hundreds of them are sent in every day.

Keep your thoughts positive!



Time Capsule

In 1999 we are going to have to focus on gathering items or stories to put in the time capsule. I have a few ideas about this which I will share with you next year.

But, please be thinking about YOUR contribution to the LST534 Time Capsule. You don't have to be a shipmate to contribute. Anyone who has anything to do with the LST534, including wives, my crew, and friends are welcome to submit stories.

WWW.LST534.COM

Yes, it's coming the LST534 website! I hope to work on it in the first half of 1999. We have the address (above) already reserved. And so far, I know what to put on it. But we need a logo (Willie Gunn, get your pallet out).

I'll keep you all in the loop as this progresses. The LST534 will live on forever!

Odds and Ends

How long a minute is depends on which side of the bathroom door you are on.

Don't forget to send get well wishes to those shipmates who are under the weather. It really means a lot to them!

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

Birthdays

November 20

Calvin Hesse, F1c
5045 Highway 956
Weiner, AR 72479



November 27

George Popham, S1c
6575 Juniper Drive
Missoula, MT 59802

December 2

Marian Alvers (My Mom)
393 W. 49th St Apt 5C
New York, NY 10019

December 5

Norris Long, QM2c
145 Northeast 31st Street
Oak Island, NC 28465

December 20

Earl Lego, Cox
5420 Niemeyer Road
Erie, PA 16509



December 25

William (Bill) Ayers, S1c
221 Westwood Avenue
Jackson, TN 38301

January 4

Edgar Overstake, SM2c
2170 Americus Blvd. South #49
Clearwater, FL 34623

January 14

Frank Frame, S1c
P.O. Box 1017
Jal, NM 88252

February 3

William Dox, S2c(Y)
443 South Main Street
P.O. Box 756
Massena, NY 13662



February 16

Louis Stockdale, Lt(jg)
407 Taft Street South
Humboldt, IA 50548

Get Well Wishes

Dick Drew, S2c
290 Semicircle Drive
Demorest, GA 30535

Roman Ritzert
Chief Hull Inspector
Evansville Shipyard
657 S Weinbach
Evansville, IN 47714

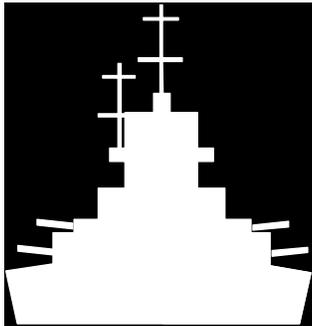
Earl Lego, Cox
5420 Niemeyer Road
Erie, PA 16509

Ira Leonard, S1c
2335 Hawthorne Dr
Foristell, MO 63348

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JUST FOR FUN

Jokes From Jim

Contributed this month by Earl & Blossom Lego

Husband: I found this great job good salary, free health insurance, and coffee breaks.

Wife: That's wonderful, dear.

Husband: I knew you'd be pleased. You start Monday.

My wife doesn't care how good looking my secretary is, said the executive. Just as long as HE can type.

Waiter #1: We are going to get away early tonight

Waiter #2: How do you know?

Waiter #3: Because when I cleared the head table, I picked up 4 pages of someone's speech.

Nautical Terms

By James Richard Drew

Poop Deck:

Short deck above the main deck opening toward the stern.

Boobie Hatch:

Small hatch allowing one person at a time to go from the main deck to the engine room.

