

LCS (L)(3) 102 alongside a work tug at Mare Island

WELCOME ABOARD THE LANDING CRAFT SUPPORT MUSEUM Housed Aboard the USS LCS(L)(3) 102

Vallejo, California

Volume I, Number 2

Ginny Rooney, Editor

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From the President's Desk

June, 2014

I am pleased to have spent the last 7 years with the LCS #102, working alongside a wonderful bunch of volunteers who didn't have the same privilege I had, being a true LCSer. The volunteers, some of them women, have been most helpful in restoring the ship to its present condition. Without them, we would not have an LCS to share with the world.

Our ship was only 23' 3" wide and 158' long with a crew of 65 enlisted men and 6 officers. We were a gunboat and did not transport troops, tanks or other mechanized equipment; strictly a landing craft support vessel with two twin 40mm guns, a single 40mm gun, four 20mm guns, four 50 caliber machine guns and 120 rockets. An LCS had the greatest firepower per ton of any ship ever built by the U.S. Navy – yes, even more than battleships, cruisers or destroyers. LCS's also had firefighting and damage control capability to assist ships that had been hit by the enemy. Hence, the nickname "Mighty Midgets."

Our crews fought many battles at such places as Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Borneo, Philippines, and China. Unfortunately, many LCSers did not return to their loved ones. I am quite certain that all of us think of these men to this day.

We had a job to do in the Navy. We were devoted to our shipmates. We thought of our future careers, our families and our homes. No finer group of men could have been brought together to serve their country.

Long live the memory of the courageous men of the Mighty Midgets!

Until next time, all my best,



Bill Mason

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EDITORIAL

Well, they said it would happen and it finally did. Spring finally showed up! Now the only white things floating in the air are the dandelion puff balls and the cabbage butterflies. No more snowflakes. No more ice storms. No more "...and the high for tomorrow will be 9 degrees!" Enter the daffodils, hyacinths and the sweet fragrance of freshly-cut grass.

Spring was never my favorite season. Autumn was at the top of my list. Probably because it ushered in the absence of heat & humidity and the smell of our neighborhood fireplaces going full tilt.

But the older I get, the more I appreciate spring and the rebirth of things emerging from their winter's rest. We have a bird feeder out front that holds 5 lbs of seed. But this time of year, I think the birds only get half of its contents. They willingly share a little bit with the squirrels. The remainder is eaten by the deer. One night, after having fallen asleep in front of the TV (I always set the timer for it to go off because I always fall asleep in front of it), I woke up about 2:30 am & looked out the front window to see 7 deer. 3 feeding from the seed on the ground, 2 licking seed from the feeder and 2 just hangin' around. Maybe they were lookouts of some sort. To some people, they're a nuisance. To others, they cause a lot of damage - eating tender new blossoms and leaving "stuff" in the yard. But I just love to look at them.

John and I live about 5 or 6 miles from Valley Forge Park, where I would see dozens of them on my way to work. At 6:30 am, they're beginning their day, too.

But a couple of years ago, somebody figured the deer were getting too overpopulated and wouldn't be able to find food for themselves in the Park. They would starve. The decision was made to "thin the herd." They would have a hunt in the park in the wee hours of the morning, when there would be no traffic – automobile, foot or bicycle. The deer that were "thinned out" were butchered & given to food banks. Worthy causes, yes. But I hardly see any deer in the park at all now. I miss them.

Which is why we try to keep the feeder filled when we can. A doe "in the family way" needs her nourishment. They come back about once a week. Maybe not all 7 of them, but in 2's & 3's. I read that they feed in one location and then move on to another location. It's probably nature's protective instincts working – being wary not to spend too much time in one place.

Soon the heat & humidity will return. We wish we knew where the deer feed in the summer. But when the cool autumn breezes return, so will the deer. They'll need food when they can't find the berries they like.

We're glad we can do our part to help. They're such gentle creatures. Please accept our apologies if your vehicle has had a close encounter with one. John had one with a car we only had for 3 weeks. But we still like to see them in our yard.

Ginny Rooney - June 2014

TRAVEL TIPS FROM THE AMERICAN LEGION

- With New Orleans being a "sunny locale," ask your doctor if any of your prescription medicines cause increased sensitivity to the sun. Many do.
- Take more prescription medicine than you think you'll need just in case.
- Ask your doctor for duplicate prescriptions in case your medicines are lost or stolen.
- If you're flying, never pack your prescription medications; put them in your carry-on.
- Sunscreen Secret: Shake the bottle well before applying; the active ingredient is suspended in a neutral lotion. The world's strongest sunscreens are made with one of these 2 ingredients: Americaine or Dermoplast.
- Sunstroke secret: Eat bananas, tomatoes & oranges which are rich in electrolytes to avoid dangerous dehydration.
- Create a Medical Information Form to carry in your wallet, passport and/or carry-on. It should include:
 - name, address, phone number
 - relatives/friends who should be contacted in an emergency
 - personal physician/dentist contact information
 - current medications, both prescription & OTC
 - known drug and/or food allergies
 - name & phone number of medical insurance co.

Editor's note: I keep a list of John's medicines on my laptop. Whenever a medication changes, is eliminated or a new one is added, the list is updated and a new "list effective date" is entered.

In speaking with Olin Hammer one day, John was complaining about all the pills he has to take every morning. Olin told him that by the time he's finished taking all his medicines in the morning, he's not hungry for breakfast anymore!

Of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important!

LCS 102 IS A VERY BUSY SHIP

The galley is a popular place aboard the ship for visitors. They "ooh and aah" at how such a small kitchen can serve so many men. Recently a visitor asked if the cookbook in the galley had a recipe for "SOS" and if that's what it's called. Indeed the recipe was there, but it's called Creamed Beef on Toast.



Photo above shows part of the mess deck.
The photo below shows the ward room.



Photo below shows the forward crew's berthing area.



Upcoming events include some "re-enactors" in Navy uniforms for D-Day+1. The 4th of July will see the Sea Cadets aboard.

Photos & information provided by Gordon Stutrud, Museum Vice President

TRANSFER OF LCS(L) ARCHIVES

Ву

Rob Rielly-Historian/Archivist, Landing Craft Support Museum

At the last board meeting of the National Association of USS LCS(L) 1-130, it was decided that the archives in my possession would be transferred to the Nimitz Education and Research Center of the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, TX.

The decision to transfer the records to the National Museum of the Pacific War was recommended by me. Our initial archive was established at the Operational Archives Branch of the Naval History and Heritage Command at the Washington, D.C. Navy Yard. Over the years it has become increasingly difficult to access the records and, in the early 2000s, I stopped sending new materials to the facility. The collection still exists and it is hoped that it will be more accessible in the future.

Materials transferred to the National Museum of the Pacific War include photographs, action reports, war diaries, various official documents, letters from crewmen, scrapbooks and other miscellaneous items relating to the LCS(L)s. Family members and others seeking information about the LCS(L) ships now have three locations at which to research. They are:

- 1. National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD. NARA holds all original log books, action reports, war diaries, operational plans, photographs, ship plans, and other items relating to the LCS(L)s. The facility is open to researchers and there is no entry charge. It is necessary to get a researcher card upon the first visit. These cards are good for one year and there is no fee for issuing the card. Documents may be photocopied at twenty-five cents per page. One may bring a camera and copy photographs or a scanner and copy them to file. Check with the NARA site for details as some scanners are not allowed. One may also bring a video camera to copy films on the LCS(S) that are available there. No appointments are needed. <www.archives.gov/>
- 2. Nimitz Education and Research Center, National Museum of the Pacific War, Fredericksburg, TX. I transferred a total of ten boxes of material to this facility in May, 2014. About 75% of the material is from my own research and the remaining material from LCS(L) sailors and their families. The facility is small Nimitz and growing and the branch asks that researchers make an appointment. <www.pacificwarmuseum.org/>
- 3. Operational Archives Branch, Naval History and Heritage Command, Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. This is the repository for all records collected by L. Richard Rhame and Ray Baumler in the early stages of the association's existence. Materials were placed there from the beginning of the 1990s to around 2002. Access has been extremely limited since 9/11 and one needs to make an appointment to gain access. This may be done by contacting the Operational Archives Branch. Be advised that there is no photocopier available to researchers. One may copy photos using a camera, but there is no copy stand. In all, this is a very difficult place to research, which is why we ceased depositing materials there. www.history.navy.mil/

At the board meeting in 2013 it was also decided that certain materials should remain in my possession for possible display on the LCS(L) 102 at some future date. These include a gas mask, gunner's mitts, gunner's face mask, uniforms, flags, banners, drawings, and other items deemed suitable for future use.

I did not transfer my extensive accumulation of negatives produced by me during the research for my five books. They remain in my possession and may prove useful at some time in the future as I will continue writing. The Nimitz Center did not have funds to cover the cost of shipping my other materials which concerned destroyers, carriers, and miscellaneous ships, Navy and Marine Corps air records and numerous other subjects. As a result, I disposed of them as space is at a premium in my writing area.

Individuals wishing to contribute materials to the archives should contact Reagan Grau, Archivist, National Museum of the Pacific War, 340 East Main St., Fredericksburg, TX 78624 (830-997-8600 ext. 262). Reagan Grau may also be reached by email at grau@nimitzfoundation.org.

BELOW IS A PHOTO OF A DOCUMENT DATED <u>30 SEPTEMBER 1945</u> THAT ROB SENT TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

LCS(L)(3) FLOTILIA FOUR c/o Fleet Post Office San Francisco, Calif.

MEMORANDUM

30 September 1945

Subject:

Flotilla Reputation.

It is requested that each Flotilla FOUR Captain assemble all hands and read this memo to them.

- 1. I have been in the Navy since I was 17 years old, that is for 23 years. I thought I had seen everything, But today I had a new experience. It is something that has moved me very much and that I wish to share with you all; because you are the reason for it.
- 2. At about noontime today two or three destroyer officers came aboard LC(FF) 1082 to say hello and ask what I was doing later on in the afternoon. I said, "Nothing. Have a lot of paper work and am going to be aboard." I thought no more of it, and said goodby to them.
- 3. At about 1630, a destroyer Commodore came aboard and said he had six destroyer Captains lying off in a boat and they request my presence. I went with theme— still wondering what it was all about. We landed over at the Navy Yard and they took me up to a native Japanese house that had formerly been a Jap Officers quarters. It was a very attractive place: garden in front, a Jap servant on duty, we took off our shoes before we entered. Then we went into the main room and sat down on mats around a low table. The Jap servant brought in glasses of Saki and beer and the Destroyer Commodore said that all his officers had served with Flotolla FOUR at Okinawa; that time and again on Roger Peter the Mighty Migets had saved their lives; that all the destroyer people agreed they had never served or been with such a fine body of men as the Flotolla FOUR Mighty Migets. Then we had a toast from each destroyer Captain who told of some experience on Roger Peter at Okinawa where the Mighty Midgets had been responsible for saving ships and lives.

The officers then told me they regretted they had only a little saki and beer and could not get all Flotilla FOUR together to tell them what t hy thought of them. So they were asking me to tell be the Flotilla representative.

There is nothing I can add to this. It is one of the finest tributes I have ever heard of. Each and everyone of you deserves it.

N. PHILLIPS, Captain, USN.

Copy to;
All Grp Comdrs and CO's Flot 4 . (5)



Roll Call of Honor

05/30/14



Farewell shipmates, rest in peace

"A nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces, but also by the men it honors, the men it remembers."

President John F. Kennedy



Richard P. Ashley, LTJG LCS 3



Victor Nistor Sr., S1/c, LCS 67 & 6



John A. McFeely, F 2/c LCS 23



Leonard H. White, LTJG, LCS 67



Jack Haisten, SC 3/c LCS 46



Richard J. Fogarty Jr. S 1/c, LCS 85



Robert E. Howell, RT 2/c, LCS 102



Robert E. Miller, MoMM 2/c, LCS 120



Milton R. McDaniel, GM 3/c, LCS 110



William J. Bradford, SC 2/c LCS 124



Roy H. Moyer, RM 3/c, LCS 118



Wayne W. Jones, S 1/c LCS 104



Joseph F. Czeczele, S 1/c LCS 118



Lamar C. Johnson, YM 3/c LCS 118

Gone but not forgotten; farewell Associate Members



Martha E. Lee, wife of Thomas M. Lee, LCS 31



Lois Augustad, wife of Bob Augustad, LCS 50



Muriel Butler, widow of Charles Butler, LCS 102



New Landing Craft Support Museum Members

Richard E. Hengst, LCS 16
Charles S. Cumming, CMoMM, LCS 51
Russell E. Tripp, LCS 79
Wilma Howell, widow of Robert E. Howell, LCS 102
Thomas S. Lee, Friend of the Museum & LCS 102
Allan Jessop, Museum Board Member and 102 Volunteer
Gordon Stutrud, Museum Executive Officer and 102 Volunteer
Monica L. McDaniel, widow of Milton R. McDaniel, LCS 110

SOME INTERESTING WORLD WAR II FACTS

From Col. D.G. Swinford, USMC, Ret, via Denny Steenbergen

- The youngest US serviceman was 12 years old. Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded and given a Dishonorable Discharge for lying about his age. His benefits were later restored by act of Congress.
- When allied armies reached the Rhine, the first thing men did was to relieve themselves in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and General Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).
- (Now pay attention to this one) Among the first "Germans" captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army. Whew! Are you still with us?
- German submarine U-1206 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.

GOING TO NEW ORLEANS?

Your Convention Committee could use some raffle prize donations. Gifts should be unbreakable and small enough to fit into a suitcase, along with all the souvenirs purchased for those at home.

Please contact Ginny Rooney or Bonnie Steenbergen to let them know what you're donating.

Thanks.

NEWSLETTER UPDATE

Just a brief note to let everyone know this will be the last issue before New Orleans. The next & final issue of 2014 will be in the Fall – after New Orleans.





Landing Craft Support Museum 1st Annual Convention at the Holiday Inn Superdome New Orleans, Louisiana

September 3-September 6, 2014

The room rates quoted below are in effect three days prior, during and three days after the 2014 convention.

Room Rate: Single \$119,

Double \$129 per night.

Room rate does not include applicable taxes. Room rate does <u>include</u> a full buffet breakfast for two people per room. Each additional person in the room is an additional \$10. Please Specify: Two double beds or king size bed.







Convention attendees may reserve their rooms by calling call 1-800-HOLIDAY and refer to the group code LCS or use can use this link. http://www.hi-neworleans.com/guest-rooms.html. A major credit card number will be required to secure your reservation. Make sure you mention that you are making the reservation for the Landing Craft Support Museum

Convention/Reunion. Attendees must complete their room reservations no later than July 18,

If you have special requirements such as an accessible room or you need a refrigerator for medical reasons, please contact the hotel front desk directly using the number listed above.

Members and Associate Members are requested to contact any non-member or *Landing Craft Support Museum* shipmates they know and encourage them to attend the convention. **Membership in the Landing Craft Support Museum is NOT required to attend the convention.** Your friends and family members are always welcome.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE CUT-OFF DATE FOR ROOM RESERVATIONS AND REGISTRATION IS July 18, 2014!!!

2014 to receive the discounted room rate.

<u>Holiday Inn Superdome</u> 330 Loyola Ave. New Orleans, LA 70112

The Landing Craft Support Museum Planning Committee is looking forward to welcoming you all to our 2014 convention in New Orleans, Louisiana.





LANDING CRAFT SUPPORT MUSEUM 2014 NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION EVENTS

GROUP WELCOME DINNER

Wednesday, September 3 (6:00 pm at the hotel)

Join your friends for a kickoff celebration featuring an all-you-can-eat buffet dinner at the hotel. This is a great chance to see who is here this year while enjoying a great meal. Dress is very casual and all you need to bring is your appetite. Don't miss this first opportunity to catch up with your friends and shipmates.

Please note: All bus driver gratuities are included EXCEPT for the Swamp Tour!

STEAMBOAT NATCHEZ

Thursday, September 4 (10:00 am - 5:00 pm)

Your two-hour cruise from the heart of the French Quarter takes you back when cotton was king and life was as slow and graceful as the flow on the Mississippi Delta. Let us show you New Orleans, one of the world's most active ports, as it can best be seen from the river aboard New Orleans' only authentic Steamboat. You will enjoy a casual lunch buffet prepared fresh on board along with a live narration of historical facts and highlights of the port. For those who are interested, the Steam Engine Room will be open to visitors.

CAJUN CRITTERS SWAMP TOUR

Thursday, September 4, immediately following Natchez cruise

If you choose this option, you will be picked up at the Steamboat Natchez and transported to the end of Bayou Segnette, where you will board the SWAMP QUEEN, a fully Coast Guard approved vessel, complete with handicap accommodations. This is **not** a high-speed, airboat. You'll enter into the backwaters of Louisiana and float past the places where pirates and Indians once roamed. Discover the beauty of cypress trees draped with Spanish moss...graceful water lilies and wild flowers. Cruise serenely through bayous and swamps carpeted by Duckbill grass. Migrating songbirds, Egrets, Ibexes, Great Blue Herons, Pelicans, perhaps you'll even see a Bald Eagle or possibly an alligator or 2. **Dangling your feet overboard is not recommended!**

OR

NEW ORLEANS SCHOOL OF COOKING

Also immediately following the Natchez cruise

For the more culinary types in our group, should you choose this option, you'll be picked up at the Steamboat Natchez and transported to the famous New Orleans School of Cooking. The entertaining classes and the Louisiana General Store are located in a renovated molasses warehouse built in the early 1800s in the Heart of the French Quarter. You'll be shown the basics of Louisiana Cooking in a way you'll never forget! Creole/Cajun experts teach New Orleans specialties such as Gumbo, Jambalaya and Pralines, and season them with history, trivia and tall tales. It's a "ga-ron-teed" good time for all.

*** REMEMBER TO CHOOSE EITHER NATCHEZ & SWAMP TOUR <u>OR</u>
NATCHEZ & COOKING SCHOOL ***

MEMORIAL SERVICE & WWII MUSEUM

Friday, September 5 (10:30 am to 4:00 pm)

The National WWII Museum in New Orleans opened on June 6, 2000, as The National D-Day Museum. Founded by historian and author, Stephen Ambrose, the Museum tells the story of the American Experience in the war that changed the world — why it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today — so that all generations will understand the price of freedom and be inspired by what they learn. In 2003, Congress officially designated it as America's National WWII Museum.

Our visit begins with our annual Memorial Service, followed by a lunch buffet. We will be given tickets to the 2 most popular exhibits: USS Tang – The Final Mission, a hands-on, personal experience to give those in attendance a feeling for what the sailors aboard this U.S. submarine endured. The other exhibit is a 4-D experience of WWII with an introduction by Academy Award-winning actor, Tom Hanks. You will feel the rumble of the German Panzer divisions in Northern Africa as well as the snow that fell during the Battle of the Bulge. This is a not-to-be-missed event!

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Saturday, September 6 (9 am to 10 am)

Location in the hotel to be announced later.

CRESCENT CITY & MARDI GRAS WORLD TOUR

Following the General Membership Meeting (10:30 am to 3:00 pm)

We'll start in the French Quarter, where lacy balconies, Spanish architecture & vibrant markets speak of the city's European forbearers, passing the "dueling oak," New Orleans Museum of Art and on to the route of the St. Charles Streetcar. We'll see City Park and have our taste of beignets (say ben-yays), sort of a cross between a fritter and a doughnut, under a blanket of powdered sugar – so don't wear black that day!

The Crescent City tour will conclude with a visit to Mardi Gras World where you'll witness an insider's view of how Mardi Gras is made, including floats and colorful costumes. We shall be returned to our hotel in plenty of time to rest & get ready for the Farewell Banquet.

FAREWELL BANQUET

Saturday, September 6 (6:00 pm at the Hotel)

Join all of your friends for your Farewell Banquet at the Hotel. Please make your entrée selection on your reservation form.

TOUR CANCELLATION INSURANCE

Protect yourself from unforeseen expenses caused by sickness, injury or any other causes that impact your travel plans. This insurance enables a refund of Tour & Banquet expenses. Please note Cancellation Insurance expires at 11:59 PM the day before the reunion starts. No refunds are given after midnight even if Cancellation Insurance was purchased. If you need to cancel – please contact us immediately: Ginny Rooney: ginroon@verizon.net or 610-256-9223 or Bonnie Steenbergen: bsteenbergen@msn.com or 303-349-5438. If you have not purchased cancellation insurance, all tour and meal money is non-refundable 6 weeks prior to the convention.

RESERVATIONS ARE DUE BY JULY 18, 2014

- > Reservation money is non-refundable after due date unless Tour Cancellation insurance is purchased.
- > Insurance holders are eligible for a refund less processing fee until Midnight before the 1st day of the convention.
- > Insurance ends once the reunion begins notification in writing/email must be received prior to start of convention.
- Late reservations are accepted on a space available basis with a non-refundable \$10 per person late fee.
- > Changes not permitted online including cancellations. Email/Mail notice for cancellations required.
- For a written confirmation please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. LCS Museum is not liable for failure of vendors to provide contracted services or any injuries/accidents that may occur during the convention.



Landing Craft Support Museum 2014 Convention **Registration & Tour Signup Sheet**

Date	Tour	Cost	Qty	Total
All Attendees must pay.	Convention Registration (Registration Fee is non refundable)	\$25 Per Person		
Wednesday Sept 3	Welcome Dinner buffet /cash bar 6:00 pm- 10:00 pm	\$43 per person		
Thursday Sept. 4	Natchez luncheon cruise and cooking school (Buffet Lunch included) 10 am-5:00 pm	\$121 per person		
Thursday Sept. 4	Natchez Luncheon Cruise and Swamp Tour (Buffet Lunch included) 10 am-5:00 pm	\$121 per person		
Friday Sept. 5	WWII Museum tour & Memorial Service (LUNCH included) 10:30 am- 3:30 pm	\$78 per person		
Saturday Sept 6	Crescent City Tour and Mardi Gras World 10:30 am-3:00 pm	\$81 per person		
Saturday Sept. 6	Convention banquet/ cash Bar 6 pm Dinner & Raffle 7:00 pm-11:00 pm			
	Broiled Tilapia Dinner	\$37 per person		
	10 oz. Rib Eye steak Dinner	\$39 per person		
	Chicken Dumonde Dinner	\$34 per person		
	Convention cancellation insurance (Non Refundable)	\$10 per person		
	Late registration fee (Non Refundable)	\$10 per person		
	Museum Dues for 2014 (If not paid already)	\$20		
	TOTAL:			
Name (As you w	vant it to appear on name tag)		Sh	ip#
Spouse:				
Guest(s):				
Address:	City:	St:	Zip:	
Phone: (Home)	Phone: (Other)			

Email Address: Emergency Contact during the Convention: _

REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS July 18, 2014 Complete and mail this entire form with check payable to: LANDING CRAFT SUPPORT MUSEUM,

C/o Dennis A. Steenbergen, 7345 W. Lakeside Dr. Littleton, CO 80125-9627

	3 1		
DATE REC'D:	CHECK #	AMOUNT:	

AIRPORT SHUTTLE IN NEW ORLEANS



Airport Shuttle New Orleans is the sole accessible-friendly transportation provider for Louis Armstrong International Airport.

They are proud to say they're GREEN and powered by propane!

Once your flight is confirmed, simply go online to www.airportshuttleneworleans.com or call toll-free, 1-866-596-2699 to make your reservation, either one way (\$20) or round trip (\$38) to our 2014 convention hotel, the Holiday Inn Downtown Superdome, located at 330 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana 70112.

LANDING CRAFT SUPPORT MUSEUM

Name:			
	(Please Print)		
Address:			
	(Number, Street, City, Stat	e and Zip Code)	
Telephone: [Home] ()		[Cell] ()	
Email:			
Check the appropriate box(es):	☐ New Membership	☐ Renewal Membership	□ Donation
Membership Dues are \$20 per ye	ar. Amount enclosed \$		
Donations are tax deductible. An	nount enclosed \$		

Donations are used directly for the operation and maintenance of the former USS LCS (L) (3) 102. The Museum is dedicated to the officers and men who served so gallantly and bravely on an LCS (L) during World War II.

Please make checks payable to Landing Craft Support Museum and send to:

Landing Craft Support Museum c/o Dennis A. Steenbergen, Secretary 7345 W. Lakeside Drive Littleton, CO 80125

Telephone: 303-470-1187

MEDAL CEREMONY ON THE LCS 102

The Vietnam War ended decades ago, but closure for a Vallejo man didn't come until Thursday, June 5, 2014. Fifty years after his tour in Vietnam, <u>Warlito Moises</u>, 70, received four medals that, due to a long-overlooked bureaucratic snafu, he never got while in the military. "The medals never mattered to me, but it's good to finally be recognized," said Moises, a retired police officer. "It's long overdue. It feels good."

Cal. State Rep. <u>Mike Thompson</u> pinned the medals on Moises' suit in a brief ceremony aboard the LCS 102, a World War II-era "Mighty Midget" ship docked at Mare Island in Vallejo. Moises received the <u>National Defense Service Ribbon</u>, the <u>Vietnam Service</u> Medal with one Bronze Star, a Navy Unit Commendation and a Combat Action Ribbon for his time in the jungle dodging the Viet Cong.

Moises wanted to join the Navy almost from birth. He grew up in Vallejo when it was still a bustling Navy town, and graduated from <u>Vallejo High School</u>. He was inspired to enlist in part by his father, a former member of the Philippine Scouts who survived the Bataan Death March in World War II. But when he went to enlist, the Navy wasn't quite as enthusiastic. "They told me I could be a steward or a cook. That's what all black and Filipino guys were told," he said. "I said, 'None of the above. I want to be a Seabee. If you say no, fine, I'll go to the Army or Marines.' They finally said OK." So Moises joined the Navy's Construction Battalion, whose members are known as "Seabees," for C.B.

He was stationed in Chi Lai, Vietnam, from February to October 1965, building airstrips with his battalion. They slept in foxholes and endured nightly attacks from the Viet Cong, he said. He has had health problems ever since, due to Agent Orange exposure, and still suffers nightmares from his time there, he said. When he returned to the U.S., the Vietnam War was so unpopular he was in no hurry to collect his medals, he said. He went to work as a Naval police officer on Mare Island, a job he held for 28 years, and served 24 years in the Navy reserves.

He and his wife of 47 years, Elicita, a retired nurse, have lived in Vallejo most of their lives. They have two daughters, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Now retired, Moises volunteers on numerous veterans endeavors, including the <u>American Legion</u>, and a year or so ago decided to track down his lost medals.

Thompson, himself a Vietnam veteran, said he receives one or two such requests a year, and always tries to assist. "It's very important that when someone serves our country, in combat, and they haven't received their medals, that we follow through," he said Thursday. "It allows them to close a chapter in their life, and they certainly deserve that."

It wasn't uncommon, in the chaos of wartime, for medals to get lost or never issued, he said. The medals may have signified the end of one chapter for Moises, but he's not done with his military work. He plans to keep crusading for veterans of all ages, he said.

"I am very happy today," he said, "but the work continues."

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Vietnam Vet Warlito Moises (left) being congratulated by CA St. Rep. Mike Thompson aboard LCS 102, on Thursday, June 5, 2014