

U.S.S. LOWNDES - APA 154 REUNION GROUP

APRIL 1997 News Letter

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Please report any errors,
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At the end of the last Ice Age (10,000 years) Florida was inhabited by Indians who had migrated from the North and Northwest following wild game.

On March 3, 1845 Florida became the 27th state admitted to the union.

On Jan. 10, 1861 Florida seceded from the Union.

In 1868 Florida was readmitted to the Union.

Average rainfall in Southeastern Florida is 64 inches.



**** N O W H E A R T H I S ****

After, lo these many years it has occurred to me that our News Letter should have a name. I welcome all suggestions that shipmates and their mates will come up with. Just drop a postcard in the mailbox. Winning entry will be determined by a panel of judges comprised of former hosts and hostesses of past and upcoming U.S.S. Lowndes Reunions. Consider this a contest. The shipmate or mate submitting the winning entry will be the recipient of an award.

PANEL OF JUDGES

Fred & Roberta Brinkman (Myrtle Beach)	Leo & Margaret O'Brien (Boston)
John & Lebbby Dyer (West Palm Beach)	Arthur & Marjorie Rauseo (Boston)
Jim & Maggie Frieden (Fort Wayne)	Earl & Frances Robertson (St. Louis)
Dick & Roseanna Jones (Duluth)	Cliff & Mary Schaffer (Harrisburg)
Joan & Don Macpherson (San Diego)	Bill & Amelia Taylor (Harrisburg)
Mike & Jerry Michalski (San Antonio)	Glenda Tuppan (San Diego)

Congratulations to Dan & Lera Wisdom on their Wedding Anniversary in May.

Cliff & Mary Schaffer panned and found gold in Alaska.

IN THE COURT OF NEPTUNUS REX
In and for the District of Equatorius

From: Neptunus Rex.
To: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. LOWNDES,
Subject: Pollywog Watch List.

1. You shall cause to have posted the following watch list.

2. The watch shall be set from 1300 to 1700 on Saturday 9th June 1945. You shall further post and set the same watch commencing at 0800 on Sunday June at 0800 on Sunday 10th June 1945 until relieved.

3. The purpose of this watch is to have all pollywogs in the open air to remove their repulsive smell before entering my domain.

4. Uniform of the day for all polywogs except watch standers shall be as follows:
Dungarees or Khaki, shirts and trousers worn backwards.

WATCH

Commanding Officer	C.H. Perdue	Officer' cap worn backwards, Submarine Jacket, Pajama trousers.
Turret Top Navigator	Lt. Hardy	Sneakers, top coat, collar without tie, no trouser, boots, hat without cover. Take sights on gun 1 with provided equipment.
Forecastle Signalman	Lt. Quinn	Fowl weather clothing, boat oars with large sheets attached. Send semaphore signals to all flying fish.
Eyes of Ship Watch	Dr. Stillerman	Diving shoes and belt, white shirt drawers, black bow tie, sailor's flat hat, white socks no trousers. Shouting :Horse Manure on the Dental Profession, we have no cure for erosion."
Damage Control Watch	Mr. Buis Mr. Pappas Riddle (CM2c) Copeland (CCM)	Mattress cover, tin helmet, bed pan and "butt kit", boots. do do

Note: Mr. Pappas and Mr. Buis alternately obtain permission from O.O.D. to open hatch to Anchor Windlass, alternately open and close hatch and report Shouting - "All bottoms are dry"

Sounding Watch	Mr. Flagg	Diving underwear, watch cap pulled over ears, boots. Sounds bilges in Engine room every min. Report personally to O.O.D. all soundings taken.
Pump Watch	Scarper (CMM)	No hat, heavy underwear, oil skin trousers shoes, no socks, pumps out bos'n Locker with diving pump. Report in person every 5 min. to bridge.
Radar Watch	Lt. (jg) Javette and Mr. Gideon	Sneakers, one white and one black sock, tel, helmet, peacoat, trunks. Bedspring on back. Shouting Long live the SHELLBACKS, Alternate.

 Subject: Pollywog Watch List.

<u>WATCH</u>	<u>WATCH STANDER</u>	<u>UNIFORM AND DUTIES</u>
Relief Pump Watch	Carothers MM1c	Uniform same as ChMM Scarper. Same Duties, alternating every 30 minutes.
Fishing Watch	Lt. Hinton	Poncho with sneaks. Walks athwartships grease gun. Fill gun with water from bucket. Squirt water in air while walking, calling "I'm a Whale. Obscenity on Errol Flynn".
Awkward Squad	ALL BOAT OFFICERS	Uniform of the Day with leggings and poncho. Full pack. Ens. Munson will take charge as Corporal of the of the Awkward Squad.
ATHLETIC WATCH	Chaplain Obrestad	Pea coats, shorts, heavy boxing gloves, and medicine ball. Play medicine ball with all Shellbacks.
Medical Watch	Comdr. Drennan	Surgical gown, tin helmet, tissue paper, duck, bed-pan. Shouts every two minutes - "All Bottoms are Clean"
Working Party	Mr. Nagle	Oilskins, southwester. In charge of working party; reports to O.O.D. every time his working party shift stores and sweeps down.
Working Party	Lt. C.O. Martin	Uniform same as Mr. Nagel. Sweep down forecastle every ten minutes. While resting, shift stores to opposite side of forecastle.
Band Master	Dr. Mohan (play ocarino)	Blue coat (on backwards) white trousers, black shoes, base ball bat as baton. Take duties as Band Master.
Band - BROWN, Phm2c, accordion; MOORE, QM3c, clarinet; SCOTT, S1c, guitar; LEWIS S1c, guitar; SOLLEY, S1c, drums; ALEXANDER, Ck, organ; TAYLOR S1c, fiddle; SPEARMAN, StM 2c, trumpet; TRAFTON, RM2c, cornet; RHODES, StM1c, guitar; WALBERG, F1c, harmonica; RANDLEMAN, Ck3c, relief organist.		
Special O.O.D.	Dr. Dunbar	White coat, one black, one white shoe, no trousers, drawers, one leggin, two baseball bats lashed together for binoculars. Cook's cap, or own without cover, welder's gloves. Serve as special O.O.D. under direction of Royal Navigator. Receive all reports from Pollywog watch.
Special Quartermaster of the Watch	Dr. O'Donnell	Southwestern. Black bow tie, white glove on right hand, boxing glove on left hand, heavy underwear, one white, one black shoe. Log in special book all reports received by special O.O.D.
TAXI SERVICE	Mr. Foughnies	Stiff collar (backwards), black tie, long handle drawers, sailor's hat, white shoes, gloves, no shirt. Run taxi service with welder's cart in forward well deck. (This service is for shell backs only.)
Corp. of the Guard	CCS Lazenby	Submarine jacket, swim trunks, one shoe, one sneaker, mail bag, piece of three inch pipe, by three feet long, for bosn pipe. Duties as directed.

 Subject Pollywog Watch List

<u>WATCH</u>	<u>WATCH STANDER</u>	<u>UNIFORM AND DUTIES</u>
Shoe Shine Brigade	Ens. Perks (in Charge)	Uniform for officers and CPO's white shirt backwards, with ties, dungaree trousers, (or khaki), shoes. Uniform for Blue jackets, white jumper, backwards, dungaree trousers, neckerchiefs. Shine Shellback's shoes; furnish shoe polish, brush and rag.
Chaplain's Trainer	Lt. Meadows	Uniform of the day. Bucket of water, towel, and smelling salts. Revive chaplain when necessary.
Water Boys	Goldstein, PhM 2/c (in charge); Bull, PhM 3/c; Buck, PhM 3/c; Laird, PhM 3/c; Leick, PhM 3/c; Anderson, PhM 3/c;	Uniform - swim trunks, flat hats, sneakers, raincoat. Serve Shellbacks cold, fresh water.
Butt-picker-uppers	Norton, RM 1/c; Wanits, MoMM 1/c; Tharp, MoMM 3/c; Vlasak, MoMM 3/c; Price, CSK; La Maitre, S1/c;	Uniform - Mattress covers, flat hats, shoes, "ducks", CPO wear own hat without cover. Pick up butts thrown on deck by Shellbacks.
Flying Fish Watch	Byland, EM 2/c; Motsinger, EM 2/c; Benson, RM 1/c; Laponuke, EM 1/c; Lellard, EM 2/c;	Uniform - Mattress covers, shoes, watch caps, (pulled over ears). Wave lanterns on the fo'castle to attract flying fish.
Chain-gang Watch	Bowling, EM 2/c; Dunbar, EM 2/c; Lemmons, Cox; Herpage, Cox; Keims, Cox;	Uniform - undress whites, shoes, watch caps pulled over ears. Take soundings with chain and grapnel, and report to special O.O.D.
Pollywog Glee Club	Ens. Brubaker (in charge); Lypichinski, Cox; Nerison, PhM 1/c; Rosen, PhM 1/c; Gordon, PhM 3/c; Berger, PhM 3/c; Pierce, HA 1/c; Hill, PhM 1/c; Ristanio, Cox; Hemmingway, Cox; Spicer, S 1/c; Tourelle, S 1/c; Christian, WT 3/c; Strand, EM 2/c; Woodward, F 1/c; Workman, F 1/c; Chappell, WT 3/c; Boothby, Y 1/c.	

NOTE -- Uniform for members of the band - dungaree shirt, no trousers, one black, one white sock, sneakers, flat hat, and drawers.
 Play requested numbers of the Shellbacks.

 1st Endorsement

U.S.S. LOWNDES (APA-154)

8 June 1945.

From: Commanding Officer.
 To: All Pollywogs.

1. The watch list as outlined above shall be complied with in all respects.
2. All pollywogs shall pay due respect and honors to the regal visit of the Court of King Neptune and to all his trusted shellbacks.

C.H. PERDUE

BUELL BINNEY, Trenton, MO - We enjoy the News Letters and hope to get back to the Reunions sometime. We are feeling pretty good, just tired and lazy. Mildred has to use a wheel chair if there's a lot of walking to be done. Hope to see you all sometime tho.

Mrs. GEORGE "LELA" KINDLE - Tahlequah, OK - It was so pleasant to read the article that Jack B. Hovey, Sr. wrote about George. I remember George telling about a boat crew dipping water. I wonder if Jack was there the night George was knocked over board from a mortar shell. I'm sure he said Carrell Brown, Can't remember the others that shut the motor off and hooked him out. He was swimming toward the boat when he came to and the propellers would have cut him up. This happened off Iwo Jima. I intend to write to several of George's Shipmates. He sure wished he could have attended a USS Lowndes Reunion. We received information that Clabern Johnston had a heart attack and passed away awhile ago.

ROBERT J. HENKELS - Dyersville, IA - Health problems and the years are catching up to me. Don't travel much anymore. This is the first time we stayed in Iowa in the winter in the last 17 years, pretty cold. We've had to curtail some of our activities, I'll be 79 Next April.

REUBEN JOHNSON, Dodgeville, WI - We are a lucky ship's crew to have had people that organized and got our reunion set up and on a successful and gratifying course. With the News Letters keeping everything fired up. Makes for a good cruise. Other ship's companies tell me there is no way they have kept any contact with former mates. The annual dues are something long over due in my opinion also. This is good business practice for the work and survival of any group. A definite cash flow is important. It's been a good cruise for sure. Bon Voyage for more continued sailing - might see you in port one day. We could slip in and surprise everyone some day. Time will tell.

LYMAN NEDEAU - Naples, FL - I received the most welcome news in the latest News Letter, just can't read it fast enough. I do feel badly that I have missed so many Reunions, but just maybe I can make the West Palm Beach one next fall. Still doing a lot of walking every day, just love it. No plastic knees or hips yet. Estimate that I've walked about 2500 miles during my stay here. After reading Leo O'Brien's comment, I'm sure he is right, we must have all been on different ships, the only thing I am sure of is we are all there and the ones that are left are really the lucky ones, thank the good Lord.

CARMEL J. FESI - Houma, LA - We enjoy the News Letters, I know you had a good time at the Myrtle Beach Reunion. Sorry we missed it, Evelyn has a triple compression fracture of the spine caused from osteoporosis, she has had a series of injections in her back which seems to have done some good. We hope to make the next one. Dan Wisdom sent me a print of the group on board the LCVP #15. That photo was taken returning from a beer party on Saipan. The coxswain isn't Jack Hovey, it is Robert Lemmons, who was from Shreveport, LA (How about it Jack? Can you clear this up?) I know this was Hovey's boat, but this took place when the outer David boats were lowered to tie up

CARMEL FESI (cont'd) to a boom which was lowered to tie up to. Different crews had boat duty and they used any boat that was handy. I know I was a member of the crew on Hovey's boat and was on that beer party, I had a beard at that time. Bob Lemmons was one of the few people who cut the sleeves out of their shirt and I can tell by the way he wore his hat. That's about all I can think of at this time. (Attention - Dick Jones, Leo O'Brien, Arthur Rauseo & Cliff Schaffer can you add anything to Carmel's version?)

DALLAS STRATTON - Belleview, FL - I do enjoy the News Letters and appreciate the effort put into it. The Reunion at Myrtle Beach was great. I wondered how Fred obtained the information he had on that Sportsman hall of fame plaque he gave me. I found out later when we stopped at our son (Dennis) on the way home. He lives in Columbia, SC. Seems Fred called him. I have been busy hunting and playing senior softball on 4 teams. We do have enough venison in the freezer to last until next fall. (Hey! How about furnishing some to the 1997 Reunion in Florida? Lorene and I are planning on driving down to see the Dyers sometime soon. We will try to help them anyway we can. (Heed that John?) Wow! Dallas went 5 for 5 in one game and 3 hits including a homer in another.

WM. J. RAMSEY - McMinnville, OR - The Myrtle Beach Reunion sounds like a complete success. Sorry not to have been there. Let me again acknowledge and thanks for the information in the News letters about our old home and family. It is really appreciated.

LEO O'BRIEN - Malden, MA - Thanks for the reunion photos and the memories of a great time in Myrtle Beach. Margaret and I are both doing OK after two weeks in sunny Florida. The weather was perfect, in the 70's and 80's. Even our own winter at home is much milder and not too much snow this year. I don't know if there are prints of boat No. 15 available in which I am standing on the stern with a boat hook. If possible I would like a print.

Editor's note: Yes Leo, by the time you receive this News Letter it should be in your hands. This photo was circulated at the Reunion with efforts to identify the personnel on board. I received this photo from Jack Laird. If anyone wants one, let me know.

JOEL RODRIQUEZ - Hidalgo, TX - As you know Dick Jones comes down to the Rio Grande Valley every year. We all got together, had breakfast with our wives at Danny's Restaurant. On the following Sunday we went to "Pepe's on the River" - a lot of dancing and beer drinking. This place is right on the edge of the Rio Grande River - Mexico is just a few feet away. Had a lot of fun - beautiful Tee Shirt Weather.

Harold Brunner has a 1979 Thunderbird V8 with 400,00 miles on it and the engine finally gave out. (Hal, where is it now?)

In 1931, "The Star Spangled Banner" officially became the national anthem of the United States.

MRS. FLORENCE RICHARDS - Nebraska City, NE - Virginia, Wallace and I are OK. Just a little slower in walking. Enjoyed the News Letter about the Reunion in Myrtle Beach. Nice to hear from Bud and Jean, also from Fred and Roberta Brinkman.

EARL ROBERTSON - St. Louis, MO - Everything here is going great. Had knee replacement on my right knee Dec. 3rd. I am now out of instructional P.T. at the hospital. Still do therapy at home, there is still some soreness even in the left yet but, I'm doing just about everything I need or like to do, no walker or cane needed. Frances is well and keeping busy with some church work and whatever comes along. Me, I'm starting to get our garden underway for the coming season. Enjoy the News Letters.

Fred Brinkman - Columbia, SC - Here is an idea that may offer a convenient way for some of our 1997 Reunion members who will drive to the West Palm Beach Reunion on Oct. 23-26 to make an overnight stop in Lowndes County (Valdosta), Georgia on Tuesday night, Oct. 21. Valdosta is located on I-75. This county is one of three for whom our ship is named. The stop at Valdosta offers a convenient way (without cost to the Reunion) for interested members of our group to help perpetrate the USS Lowndes Reunion and the memory of William Lowndes and the tie-in of our ship with Lowndes County, Georgia. Advance reservations would be made at a selected hotel. Arrangements would be made with several officials to join us for an informal breakfast at the hotel on Oct. 22. Included would be the Lowndes County Chairman, Mayor of Valdosta, Chamber of Commerce President, and head of the Lowndes County Historical Society. If necessary the breakfast would be Dutch for each person in attendance. (The County group might extend an offer to host the breakfast). Perhaps a "USS Lowndes Honorary Certificate" could be presented to each official. Immediately following breakfast, our participating Reunion members could be on their way to Florida. Valdosta is approximately 390 miles from West Palm Beach for those who want to arrive on Wednesday, Oct. 22. Details for the stop at Valdosta need to be worked out. I would be glad to make the necessary arrangements, Their Chamber of Commerce has expressed a strong interest in our Reunion. Anyone interested in this stop over in Valdosta, Georgia, please contact Fred.

JAMES V. ROSS - Sherman, TX - Ina and I went to the Iwo Jima Survivors Reunion in Irving, Texas. It was four very enjoyable days - the Irving High School MCJROTC performed a re-enactment of the first and second flag raising on Mt. Suribachi 52 years ago in 1945. Some "Congressional Medal of Honor" recipients attended, as well as Paul Tibbets, the pilot of the "Enola Gay", who dropped the atomic bomb. Many other dignitaries were also in attendance.

The coastline of Florida is 1,350 miles long, more than any other state except Alaska.

WARREN & ALBENA PROCTOR - Jarrell, TX - I can't tell you how much we appreciate the pictures and News Letters. We have really enjoyed the two Reunions we got to attend. We had such a good time in South Carolina. I couldn't help but laugh when Bud tried so hard to get all the women in the picture and kept telling us to get close together. We finally turned side ways but we were just about as wide one way as we were the other. One of the women wanted to give her camera to someone and get them to take a picture at the same time and she said "Can't I just-". Bud said NO! I know he was trying hard to get us All so we could have a good picture of everyone and I really do appreciate it but, it was funny. We have been very fortunate and stayed well. After leaving Myrtle Beach we traveled around the state, went to Charleston, Fort Sumter, Then through the mountains, sure was pretty. (Sorry about the mix-up on the photo captions.)

ELMER TREVILLYAN - National City, CA - I'm glad to read the News Letters, Nice to hear from the crew and what's going on. Made a fishing tackle box and it holds all of my gear including folding chairs, ice chest, etc. Also serves as a seat. Went fishing three times and caught a 5 pound white catfish, I'd never heard or seen one before. Went hunting once, saw several rabbits but didn't fire a shot. Edna fell in 1994 and had a new hip put in and again last October.

LEO O'BRIEN - Malden, MA - Bud, thought you might appreciate the program of a memorial for comrades that were killed at Iwo Jima. It is mostly a Marine affair with about 20 - 30 veterans of the 3rd, 4th and 5th Marines and two sailors in attendance, me and one other. I had Bowman and Richards in my mind when they played Taps. It brought back memories of other exploits of the Beach Party and the crews especially. This was the 27th year that this ceremony has been held. It really is quite impressive.

HENRY McNAMEE - Lake Suzy, FL - A few weeks ago William & Lorraine Scheu from South Bend, In came knocking at our door.; "Are you H. McNamee from the USS Lowndes?" They found Lake Suzy. Just follow highway 75 to exit 31 (King's highway) turn left and go 2 miles to large sign saying Heron Point and the Villas. Enter Heron on right side to unit #1708. (Ed. note: Guess there is a Lake Suzy, Florida.)

The following list of United States Naval ships bear the names of many of many of our shipmates on the U.S.S. Lowndes -APA 154 original roster.

USS Bailey - DD 492	USS Hovey - DMS 11	USS Richardson - AP 118
USS Briscoe - APA 6	USS Hughes - DD 4100	USS Robinson - DD 562
USS Briscoe - DD 977	USS Hughes - AP 124	USS Robinson - DDG 12
USS Buck - DD 761	USS Johnson - DD 821	USS Scott - DDG 995
USS Buck - DD 420	USS Johnston - DD 557557	USS Sims - DD 409
USS Copeland - FFG 25	USS King - DDG 41	USS Taylor - FFG 50
USS Davis - DD 395	USS Lyman - DE 302	USS Taylor - DD/DDE 468
USS Dawson - APA 79	USS Lyman - LST 903	USS Turner - DD 468
USS Dickson - DD 708	USS Munson - DD 698	USS Turner - DD 648
USS Fox - CG 33	USS Murray - DD/DDE 576	USS Turner - DD/DDR 834
USS Gordon - AP 117	USS O'Brien - DD 975/725	USS Walker - DD 517
USS Hovey - DD 208	USS Ramsey - FFG 2	USS Ward - APD 16
		USS Webb - ??

MEMORIES

LYMAN NEDEAU - Naples, FL - I can't help too much but a few amusing things did happen like the one that **Mike Michalski** told about the strong coffee and the spoon and handle. I do remember another incident. During an inspection tour of the engine room by the Chief Engineering officer with his yeoman and several other officers, we had a first aid kit hanging on a bulkhead or beam and when it was opened along with first aid supplies was some home made cookies, candy bars, etc. Don't remember if they ever found out who's it was, but believe me, we all heard about it. One other memory, I had been transferred from "M" division to "A" division to oversee the evaporator room, steering engine, officer's cook stove (oil burning), what else? But I was able to get some real good doughnuts from the cook and a time or two was able to get partially empty ice cream containers. I was told if I ever got caught it would be my last day aboard the **Lowndes**. I believe we consumed the stuff in the evaporator room.

JOHN L. LACKEY - Burbank, CA - On February 19 - 52 years ago when I woke up, the first thing I thought of. My boat was loaded with Marines. Me and my crew (**Andy Escamilli**, Signalman - **George Rosenbaum**, Deck Hand - **Wm. Caldwell**, Motor Mac.) landed the Marines on Yellow Beach No. 2. We operated boat No. 2 LCVP. We were in the first wave. It was great seeing the 1945 Christmas dinner menu.

WARREN E. PROCTOR - Jarrell, TX - Here's the story I promised to send you, I know you can't publish the News Letter without something to write about. I was in the boat group in charge of LCM's. When aboard ship I was ship's company in the 3rd Deck division and stood all my watches on the bridge. On the helm or bosun's watch. I remember a lot of things that happened. Once when we had troops aboard and was going around the island from Pearl we passed an island or rock. There were planes practicing dive bombing and torpedo runs on it. One plane turned and went the wrong way and hooked the wings of another plane. Both went down. We saw three men bail out, never knew if there was supposed to be any more. **Ray Pease** picked one of them out of the water. Those on the ship and below deck didn't get to see any of the action. Another time, while we were at Iwo Jima, we were waiting to be called in to the beach, an amphibian fighter plane flew by, the Japs had a 5 inch gun on a track. They would run it out and fire it. They finally hit this plane in about the middle and it broke in two. Two men bailed out and were picked up, they were OK. On our trip to the beach the Marines we had aboard asked if we had any pogy bait (candy). I gave them a box full and received a big knife in exchange. I still have it. There are a lot of memories that I wouldn't take anything for them, but don't want any more like that.

No one is rich enough to buy back his past.

MEMORIES

MIKE MICHALSKI - Austin, TX - "A Four Legged Buddy". Our gunnery officer, Mr. Hinton (Errol Flynn's double) brought his basset hound named, "Lucky" aboard. Although he spent the nights in the compartment with the bakers - he was at my bunk by 0600 every morning because we became playmates. I slept on the top bunk (4th one up). If I had been on the midnight to 0400 watch I had the privilege of staying in the bunk later - just had to be out of the bunk and had it made up by 0800. However, some shipmate would always awaken me advising me that my buddy was waiting. We would go up on the deck just forward of the bridge and play every morning. Just forward of that deck were two ladders, one on each side of the ship connecting that deck to the one below. The steps on all ladders were metal with holes punched upward in them to give your shoes traction. Lucky had no problem going up them because his paws and legs were more or less horizontal with the steps and the holes gave him no problem. However, going down he had to be very careful so his foot would not go through a hole and get caught, so I would also come up. Then I'd give him the raspberries and run down the ladder. He would run across the ship to that ladder and on his way down - trying to go as fast as he could to catch me, but having to be very careful not to step in the holes in the steps he would let out the loudest howling I've ever heard. I just know - some day the skipper was going to come out of his cabin and put me on report. Thank goodness that never happened and Lucky and I did have fun.

J. SHELTON SCALES - Martinsville, VA - I remember fondly the Lowndes' skipper Charles Perdue. I had my meals in his cabin aboard the APA 154, as was customary for my designation as CO of troops (3rd Bn, 23rd Marines, 4th Marine Division with attached units).

(Congratulations to Sheldon and Judy on their 55th wedding anniversary 1 January, 1997).

DALLAS STRATTON - Belleview, FL - An incident that comes to mind when we were going into Okinawa. One day we were having one general quarters after another. Dale Strode and I had just lit the evaporators back-up, when we heard a noise that sounded like the bilges being pumped. I asked him if he asked the engine room to pump them and he said no. He called the engine room and they said for us to secure them immediately, that the noise we heard was the 20mm and 40mm guns shooting at an enemy plane. It turned out to be a friendly plane. I always did wonder if our gunners could hit anything after watching them shoot at sleeves during practice. Another thing I remember was when the Army or Marines were loading supplies on board, a few cases of canned rations found their way to the evaporator room. We hid them under the grates and held our breath during inspections. We did enjoy bacon and eggs on our little hot plate. Our son Dennis and I are going on a late season deer hunt in the Florida panhandle. Enclosed a photo of me to keep rats and cock roaches out of your garage.

Editor's note: Do any of the Lowndes gunners have a reply for Stratton?

"People who never do more than they get paid for never get paid for anything more than they do."

AMERICUS in HONSHU

From the diary of E. Max Cole:

Japan sprawled before us that morning almost in a virginal state, so far as Occidental prowlers were concerned, & in the cold morning light came a sentence heard time & again on less happy occasions than this - at Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Saipan, Leyte & others. Here it was again: "Looks just like any other island." The Ensign who said it squinted through his Navy binoculars at a white puff of smoke slowly stretching itself behind & across the waterfront of Aomori, Honshu. "The Nippies got a railway up here," he added, with some wonder in his voice. Carrier planes were overhead, weaving through the dim overcast; they turned south, lost altitude & roared over the dock area where bright pinpoint spots of light cut here & there through the haze of distance. I straightened myself & shivered a little. The wind was whipping across my face; I turned out of it, looking around the bay. Aomori Wan (Wan is the Jap word for bay) is shaped like the inside of any Occidental horseshoe, with the end part opening North toward Hokkaide - which like Catalina can be seen on a clear day. All around, back from the shore of the bay, slopes of the hills, generously covered with scrubby timber. On the bottom of the curve is the city of Aomori, or what Admiral Halsey's boys left of it. Looking astern, I saw several other attack transport ships, finding their anchorages. Our ship, the U.S.S. Lowndes, carried the 321st regiment, 1st & 3rd battalions of the 81st Infantry Division, which with parts of the IX Army Corps were now standing into Northern Japan embarked on some twenty-odd ships, preparing to land for the occupation. The date: 25, August, 1945. Ship's routine wasn't very different from Combat D-Days. We called this one O-Day, & were up at 0430 drinking hot joe, talking about the Navy point discharge system & munching the flat brown steaks. I wondered once again why the Navy always served steak for breakfast on the morning hours of an invasion. H-Hour was 0900 for the troops to land. Full combat dress for troops was prescribed. A skeleton force of Seabees and Army specialists had been dispatched ahead of us to scout the beaches & direct the Japanese army & civilians as to what was expected of them. No organized resistance was anticipated, but the Army was prepared for the unpredictables, while the Navy had sent up a silent show of force - just in case. At 0730 a monotonous voice droned through the ship's speakers: "Set condition A-1. Hatch crews man your hatches. Boat crews man your boats. Debarkation Officers man your stations." I made sure that I had my cigarettes & made my way to my station. For once I got the earphones placed without getting a half-hitch around my neck with the wire. No helmet to worry about. No strain this morning. Tested my phone to the bridge. "Control, this is No. 8." "No. 8, control." "Checking in." "Roger. Glad to see you're out of the sack." "The winches began their groan to lift the heavy landing crafts from their cradles. The Army stood clear, watching with a good amount of awe & uncertainty as the boats swung up out & down to the rail where the 3 man crew hopped in. The boat hit with a flat splash. "How much do they weigh, mate?" I turned to see an Army Lt. at my elbow chewing gum & watching the boat shake loose from its cradle. "About 8 tons," I answered. He thought that over for a minute. "That's 10,000 pounds. Wouldn't think that cable could hold it. They ever snap?" "None on this ship," "Just the same I wouldn't walk under the bastard, have some gum?" I watched him climb down the debarkation net, when he reached the boat riding the swells alongside, he looked up at me, holding on to his helmet with one hand & called out, "See you in Honshu, Lt. as he grabbed the gunwale to steady himself. "See you in Honshu." That started me thinking. I knew some of the crew weren't exactly thinking of the Wabash, & I wondered if the Navy had thought about it. The Navy had, because about noon I saw the Task Force commander's order expressing his desire that each officer & man get a chance to set foot on Japanese soil & provided a way to do it. Meaning we must keep our nose clean; nothing was to be purchased, pilfered or raped. Early the that afternoon we were splashing ashore in a landing craft. As we rounded the breakwater to get into the smaller inner harbor, a sign freshly painted on an ancient piling greeted: "Joe Selinski, Brooklyn, Seabee. Welcome to Aomori, U.S.A." We pulled up to a worn concrete dock & climbed ashore. The Japs were happily unloading the boats. One of our officers shot me a glance that looked like "who's kiddin' who?" It was incongruous. Aomori's waterfront smelled of dead fish in the North Pacific. Flies were having a feast, moving over likely looking morsels of offal that were no doubt the major source of local fragrance. Our party started off at a brisk walk, skirted a blocky warehouse with faded Jap characters painted on it, & headed

AMERICUS (cont'd) & headed in the direction of what appeared to be the main part of town. Occasionally a seaman or storekeeper would bound ahead or lag behind to dig into the rubble piled on either side of the streets. One came back with a piece of painted china, another with a rather tired Jap syringe. Not many souvenirs appeared to be worth taking & the men grumbled about it. But fire bombs had destroyed **Aomori** - the town was mostly ashes. As we moved among the destruction the conversation had a habit of returning in wonder at those happy Japs on the beach & what they had to giggle about. We followed a party of men toward the first Oriental-looking building we'd seen. The eaves were up-swung on the corners like the pictures, & it had a sort of permanent look; apparently the Japs had used their meager fire equipment to save a Buddhist Temple. As we neared the place we saw a neat row of shoes on the top step leading into the shrine; they were clogs, looking very much like what most of us wear in the shower, though these boasted the extra touch of a high heel. The sailors were gathering on the steps, looking indecisive, & wondering whether it was all right to go in. Before I could debate it, a **Nipponese** deacon or perhaps a Sunday School Superintendent attired in a loose fitting civilian outfit, whisked down the steps, bowing & flashing his gold dentures, Lt. **Stillerman**, the ship's dentist, had come up behind me & was casting a professional glance at the bridgework nodding slowly when the deacon spluttered a few words in his own tongue & hissed what I took to be a welcome to the Navy. "What do you know, they really hiss." observed the dentist, still trying to make an estimate on that front bridge. But the deacon scotched that by snapping his mouth shut & started the party up the steps. One of the ship's yeomen grabbed my sleeve & whispered "Do these shoes have to come off? I got a hole in my sock. Think **Ming Toy** up there would mind?" I noted the deacon was sporting a pair of black oxfords with apparently no intention of kicking them off, so I motioned the yeoman to follow. Inside Japs & Yanks were mingling, all making a great deal of noise stamping about on the wooden floor, & the sound magnified itself through the emptiness of the temple. The deacon had turned the party over to a peach-faced boy of about 12 who had eyes of the wide king-sized almond type you expect in an Oriental. As the deacon clomped off, the boy began fumbling with file cards, selected one & held it out. I peered around a Bluejacket to see it, in rather large printing the word **DRAGON**. Our eyes followed his motion to an elaborate molding a series of golden dragons, tails mingled with fangs, scales, claws & snake-like bodies twining luxuriously around the room. These handsome creatures would have been worthy of any alcoholic nightmare Falstaff might have dreamed up, everybody craned their approval accordingly. The boy fumbled for the next card. **BUDDHA** was printed on this one. Buddha was there all right, about a foot high, surveying us with a rather gaseous, contented expression from behind a glass pane enclosure on the altar at the end of the shrine. The altar looked Episcopalian in size & utility, the boy's next card assured us it was covered with gold leaf. We were ceremoniously bowed out to make room for newcomers. The Temple had its graveyard: ancient tombstones, thin & in bunches barely inches apart. I wondered where the bodies were until an enlisted man reminded me that the Japs economically cremated the dead, in which case a shoe box was ample for the final disposition. We moved along another road, watching other parties, each with their share of rubble browsers. Many Jap military passed us by. The Jap soldier was a tatterdemalion; his uniform appeared anything but uniform in color; cut & size, each wore a baseball cap. The Jap women kept their heads too low to meet our glance. If a husband was along, he jogged about two paces ahead of his wife. We worked our way toward a settlement not ravaged by fire. The local citizens indulged in much peek-a-booing from their frame houses. The **Philipinos** had told us at **Leyte** that the Japs cut up their furniture to use as firewood. Two sailors were overheard, one said "These Jap babes look quiet enough, but I don't trust 'em." "Why not?" the other one asked. "Remember the Marine Sgt. we had aboard at Iwo-the one that sold me the Jap gun? He said the gals would lie naked in the jungle covered with mud & grass & wait all night with a rifle to snipe at the gyrenes?" "The Japs took women down to **Guadal**?" "Sure special trained snipers." I reflected, I heard that same story in the **Solomons**. That one, & a lot of others were equally unbelievable. We saw few enough Japs then or since who were alive & kicking, & now with them all at close scrutiny, there remained an unreadable countenance on them. Grinning ones, shy ones & those that avoided your eyes. 1600 & the rice fields were losing their brilliance. Back at the wharf the flies buzzed off to clear us a path. One sailor said "The ship would look good to him about now, that **Japan** was just another island." "And so we bid farewell..."

D O W N T O T H E S E A :

George Tuppan missed the last Reunion in Myrtle Beach last October due to serious health problems suffered during 1996. He had checked into the hospital on January 15th. Glenda informed us that she lost George on January 19, 1997. George will be missed. He was an integral part of the U.S.S. Lowndes Reunion Group. He was the shipmate that spotted William Lowndes' grave marker in South Carolina inspiring Fred Brinkman to delve into the history books and locating descendants of the South Carolina Statesman that our ship was named after. George was the fuel oil king aboard ship. He came aboard September 1944 at Pearl Harbor and stood watch on the throttle. Was discharged in April 1946. 1 hour after discharge his dad came home, told him he did a good job, change clothes we are going to work. Was in the construction business, miscellaneous and architectural metals for 30 years. Survivors are Glenda, 2 children and 3 grandchildren. George was born on April 4, 1925 in Los Angeles, CA.

Inez Flagg has notified us that Lt. Wm. D. Flagg passed away September 4, 1996 due to a heart attack.

Ed. King's wife Doris passed away November 27, 1996.

Lela Kindle informs us of the demise of Robert Clabern Johnston.

No other information available.

Taps

Day is done, gone the sun,
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky,
All is well,
Safely rest,
God is nigh.

Deepest sympathy to the families.

USS LOWNDES - APA 154 DECEASED PERSONNEL

Donald William BOWMAN (Iwo Jima Campaign)
 Norman Robert RICHARDS (Iwo Jima Campaign)

Benn. L.	BAILEY	William B.	LAWRENCE
Edward	BENSIE	B.	LHIELE
Joseph	BOTTI	Edward John	LIPCZYNSKI
Oscar Tyson	BRACEY	Arnold M.	MATZEN
James E.	BRISCOE	Stanley Ambrose	MATZ
Elmer Carrell	BROWN	Thurman Elmer	McFARLAND
Domer Slater	BURK	Harvey A.	McGOWAN
Sam	CAROTHERS	Claude W.	MEADOWS, Jr.
John F.	CARY	Carl Conrad	MILLER
Wendell H.	CHILDREY	George Bernard	MILLER
Slater Frank	CHRISTIAN	Leon	MONDAY
Robert C.	JOHNSTON	Richard LeBarron	MOORE
Wendell W.	COFFEY	Charles Francis	MURRAY
Owen Cavanaugh	COLLINS	N. W.	NAGEL
Roy D.	COLLINS	Curtis Garland	NERISON
Arthur Bejamin	CORBETT	Howard L.	NIELSEN
George Maynard	DAHMS	Erle	NIEMI
Glenn	DENNIS	Alex R.	O'NEAL
Lee Peter	DERUGA	Charles H.	PERDUE (Capt.)
Floyd Joseph	DETIVEAU	C. H.	PASCHAL
Arthur	DEVERAUX	C. L.	PERKS
George L.	DRENNAN	Billy H.	PIERCY
George	DUDASH	Stuyvesant A.	PINNELL
Robert Earl	DUNN	William H.	POLLOCK
Roy E.	ECHOLS	Leo A.	POTHAST
Eugene H.	ENGLE	Hubert Wesley	RAVENSCRAFT
Bertil	ERLING	Albert P.	RESETAR
Andy	ESCAMILLI	Martin Joseph	REZZA
William D.	FLAGG, Jr.	John Milton	RICE
Wesley E.	FOLLETT	David T.	RICHARDSON
David E.	FREDERICK	Bernard	ROGERS
Jerome Robert	FRIEDER	George S.	ROTH
Raymond Henry	GOLEMBOWSKI	Harley O. "Red"	SARTEN
Fred Irwin	GUNNELL	Ernest O.	SCOTT
Fred E.	GROH	Haywood S.	SMITH
Raymond Louis	GUIMONT	George A.	SKELLY
Marvin Robert	GUNDERSON	Joseph McKinzie	SONNIER
James W.	HALL	Harvey Glenn	STEVENSON
Merrill W.	HART	Robert H.	STONER
Fred Wayne	HATTEN	Frederick G.	TIMMS
Albert Franklin	HERRINGTON	Norman Wesley	TREANOR
Edgar L.	HINTON	George R.	TUPPAN
Clement M.	HOFFMAN	Wesley	VLCEK
Gordon Russell	HOLLEY	Steve Thomas	VALASK
John R.	JOHNSON	Walter B	VROBLE
Leonard A.	JOHNSON	Elwin	WAHLBERGE
Robert Clabern	JOHNSTON	Harold F.	WARD
George L. D.	KINDLE	L. V.	WEBB
Robert Elvin	KIEME	Lawrence Clinton	WELCOME
Lee Cruse	KING	Harold C.	WIDDOWS
Samuel J.	KRAUSE	Leo. J.	WINTER
Roland Edward	KRUEL	Joseph G.	YOUNG
Joseph A.	KUBINA	Joseph Fred	ZINKGRAF
Russell	LaPONUKE	Lawrence	ZWIEG