

# LOCATING YOUR CREW

Locating other members of your crew can be a lot of fun and very rewarding--but there is no single place you can write to and get their addresses. The 1974 *Privacy Act* makes it difficult for the V.A. or the Social Security people to forward letters!!!

In the past two years I have called and written to all the major agencies that seemed like a good bet, and even talked to some in person. The tips listed on this page are by no means the final word--If you have other sure-fire methods, please share them with us. By using the following methods, my father and I were able to make contact with six of the crew, and two widows. In addition, the V.A. confirmed a 7th man had died. Less than 3 months after making contact with one of the guys, he passed away--so my advice is to get to it!

## Make A List

If you don't have *any* solid info on your crew, you need the **muster rolls** from the Archives. These contain full names, service numbers and place of enlistment of all enlisted crew members. Most of the LST logbooks will have the same dope on the officers assuming your LCT was ever on an LST.

## Contact the Veterans Administration

Call, or better yet, visit your local V.A. office and show them your list. At the least, they will tell you if any have died and benefits were collected by their families. At best, you *may* get a current address to try out. You absolutely *must* have the **service numbers** or you may as well forget the V.A. as a source of help.

A quick explanation here--the V.A. only keeps active records on file for a short time then they end up buried in St. Louis so they will **not** forward any letters unless you can prove a legal or medical need to contact a veteran. More on St. Louis later.


## The Computer--Yahoo

Next, you need a computer to search the U.S. phone books online using one of the free "finder" services such as **Yahoo** or **Switchboard**. Don't buy those \$50 CDs with "millions of phone numbers" when this method is free! Here's what Yahoo looks like. . .

Welcome, Guest User Create My Account Sign Up

**Yahoo! People Search** SEARCH FOR ANYONE!  
Search for by:

Merchant Spotlight Telephone Search

 Try a card! Click Here to call	First Name <input type="text"/>	Last Name (required) <input type="text"/>
	Address <input type="text"/>	State <input type="text"/>
	City/Town <input type="text"/>	State <input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	CA <input type="text"/> Search <input type="button"/> Reset <input type="button"/>

Enter a name and you'll get addresses and phone #s. Warning--common names like *Brown* will get you thousands of names so my advice is to limit your search to less common names with a **state** and **city**. Muster rolls will give you their wartime home state--I located 4 guys this way. But no Browns or Smiths.

For families of those fellas that the V.A. tells you have passed away, go to a search engine like Yahoo and type in **Social Security Death Index**. Another free service, this will list the city in which the death benefits were paid. We found the 2 widows this way.

Be prepared to send out *lots* of letters or make phone calls. A form letter works good. Explain who you are looking for and I guarantee you will hear back from people--hopefully your crew members.

## Forwarding Letters

I had limited luck with federal, military and private agencies. There are places that will forward letters but they are probably using old addresses so don't expect results. Your best bet is the **Department of Veterans Affairs** in St. Louis. They are the ones in charge of storing the old files for all vets. Here's what you do:

Send them a short, concise letter explaining that you are trying to locate a fellow WW2 vet for reunion purposes--*one* request per letter (they're fussy about this). If they have any info on this guy they will respond--it takes 6-10 weeks, so be patient. They will also tell you if they have any record of his death.

Their address:

**Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Records Management Center  
P.O. Box 5020, St. Louis, MO 63115-0020

## Other Sources

Contact the **VFW** and **American Legion**--local offices will give you a phone # of the H.Q. for other states. *These* offices will search to see if your vet is a member. The following *may* also be of assistance:

**Veterans Administration** -- 1-800-827-1000 (toll free)  
**Reunion Publications** -- will post queries  
**Navy Times Locator Services** -- 1-703-750-8636

*On-line Locators on the Internet:*

**Alumni** -- <http://vets.com/alumni/index.htm>  
**VA Online** (telenet)-- [vaonline.va.org](http://vaonline.va.org)  
Our own LCT Home Page -- check out the *links*